

INVESTING IN RURAL ILLINOIS: PROMOTING ECONOMIC, WORKFORCE, HEALTHCARE, AND EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Annual Report to the Governor And General Assembly

Prepared by

Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs Western Illinois University

In consultation with

Lt. Governor Evelyn Sanguinetti, Chairperson Governor's Rural Affairs Council August 1, 2017

MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNOR'S RURAL AFFAIRS COUNCIL

Member Agencies and Associations of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council

Office of the Lt. Governor

Illinois Agricultural Association / Illinois Farm Bureau

Illinois Community College Board

Illinois Department of Agriculture

Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

Illinois Department of Employment Security

Illinois Department of Human Services

Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Illinois Department of Public Health

Illinois Department of Transportation

Illinois Department on Aging

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency

Illinois Finance Authority

Illinois Housing Development Authority

Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs

Illinois State Board of Education

Rural Partners

Southern Illinois University, Center for Rural Health and Social Service Development University of Illinois – Cooperative Extension

Citizen Members

Luke Allan Heather Hampton-Knodle Doug Hankes Todd Kaeb Sonja Reece Larry Richards

Ex-Officio Members

Molly Hammond, USDA—Rural Development (Illinois)
Norman Walzer, Northern Illinois University, Center for Governmental Studies

PURPOSE OF THE GOVERNOR'S RURAL AFFAIRS COUNCIL

The purpose of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council is to develop and implement coordinated strategies to improve the way government services are delivered to the residents of rural Illinois. The end goal is to expand opportunities and enhance the quality of life for rural residents. The Lieutenant Governor, as Chairperson of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council, and the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs at Western Illinois University, shall continue to issue an Annual Report in accordance with Executive Order 4 of May 18, 2011, and Executive Order 13 of October 11, 1991.

Copies of these Executive Orders are located in the Appendices

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Members of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council	i
Purpose of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council	ii
Table of Contents	iii
List of Figures and Tables	v
Acronyms	vi
Executive Summary	vii
Part I. Introduction	1
The Only Constant is Change	1
Origins of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council	2
Part II. Economic and Demographic Summary of Rural Illinois	5
Defining Rural Illinois	5
Changing Conditions in Rural Illinois	5
Population Change in Rural versus Urban Counties	5
Economic Conditions in Rural Illinois	
Health Care Access in Rural Illinois	
Education in Rural Illinois	21
Part III. GRAC Working Group Activities	29
Economic Development Working Group	29
Workforce Development Working Group	32
Health Working Group	
Education Working Group	
Summary of Working Group Activities	
Local Government Modernization Issues	39
Part IV. Governor's Rural Affairs Council Member Activities	41
Introduction	41
Illinois Community College Board	41
Illinois Department of Agriculture	43
Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity	43
Illinois Department of Employment Security	44
Illinois Department of Human Services	46
Illinois Department of Natural Resources	49
Illinois Department of Public Health	50
Illinois Department of Transportation	51

Illinois Department on Aging	52
Illinois Environmental Protection Agency	54
Illinois Finance Authority	
Illinois Housing Development Authority	57
Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs	
Illinois State Board of Education	
Northern Illinois University, Center for Governmental Studies	
Rural Partners	61
Southern Illinois University, Center for Rural Health and Social Service Development	62
University of Illinois Cooperative Extension	64
United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Development	64
Part V. Conclusions	66
References	67
Appendix A: Governor's Executive Order 13 (1991)	72
Appendix R: Governor's Executive Order 11-04 (2011)	73

LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1. Nonmetropolitan Counties in Illinois	6
Figure 2. Number of Farms and Average Farm Size in Illinois, 1950 to 2017	
Figure 3. Population Change, 2000 to 2016	10
Figure 4. Median Age by County, 2015	
Figure 5. Percent Change in Manufacturing Employment, 2001 to 2015	
Figure 6. Illinois Unemployment Rate, March 2017	
Figure 7: Job Growth in Illinois, Metro and non-Metro Counties, 2007 to 2015	
Figure 8: Real Average Wage per Job in Illinois Metro and non-Metro Counties, 1995 to 2015	
Figure 9: Median Household Income 2015	18
Figure 10: Rural Versus Urban Poverty in Illinois, by County and Census Tract, 2016	19
Figure 11: Percentage of Adults Reporting Struggles with Mental Health Issues, 2010 to 2014	
Figure 12: Percent Change in Opioid or Heroin Overdose Death by County from 2010 to 2015	
Figure 13: Number of People Served by Each Primary Care Provider by County, 2012	25
Figure 14: Percent of Children with Food Insecurity in Illinois, 2016	26
Figure 15: ACT Comprehensive Scores by Unit and High School District, 2013-2014 School Year	
Figure 16: Instructional Costs per Student, 2013-14 School Year	
Figure 17. Crude Rate of Emergency Department Visits for Opioid and Heroin Overdose	
(per 10,000 people) in Illinois, 2016	35
Figure 18. Hepatitis C Prevalence Rate by County, 2006-16,	
with Average Age of Recent Cases, 2014-16	37
LIST OF TABLES	
Table 1. Population Trends Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Counties	7
Table 2. Farms and Average Farm Size in Illinois, 1950 to 2017	
Table 3: Current and Peak Year Population for 66 Illinois Non-Metro Counties,	
Sorted by Year of Peak Population	8
Table 4: Farm by Farm Size and Farms by Sales, as Percent of Total Farms, 2002 to 2012	11
Table 5: Illinois Metro and Non-metro Employment by Sector, 2015	
Table 6: Income Variables and Poverty Rate in Rural versus Urban Illinois Counties, 2015	
Table 7: Educational Attainment in Illinois, Persons 25 and Over	
Table 8: Portfolio of Illinois Department of Human Services Programs Serving Rural Residents	47

ACRONYMS

AAA	Area Agency on Aging	IHWAP	Illinois Home Weatherization Assistance
AP	Advanced Placement		Program
APP	Abandoned Properties Program	IIRA	Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs
APS	Adult Protective Services Program	ILHITREC	Illinois Health Information Technology
BMP	Best Management Practice		Regional Extension Center
BRP	Blight Reduction Program	ILPMP	Illinois Prescription Monitoring Program
CCP	Community Care Program	ISBE	Illinois State Board of Education
CEO	Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities	IVS	Illinois Virtual School
	Program	LIHEAP	Low Income Home Energy Assistance
CEU	Continuing Education Unit		Program
CGS	Center for Governmental Studies	LIHTC	Low Income Housing Tax Credit
CNC	Computer Numeric Controlled	LLC	Limited Liability Company
CORE	Creating Opportunities for Retention and	LMI	Labor Market Information
	Expansion	LTCOP	Long Term Care Ombudsman Program
CRHSSD	Center for Rural Health and Social Service	MAPPING	Management and Planning Programs in
	Development		Nonmetropolitan Groups
CTE	Career Technical Education	MAT	Medication-assisted Treatment
CTIC	Conservation Technology Information Center	MSSP	Medical Student Scholarship Program
DCEO	Department of Commerce and Economic	NESP	Nursing Education Scholarship
	Opportunity	NIU	Northern Illinois University
EDA	Economic Development Administration	NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
EIT	Entrepreneurship, Innovation & Technology	OMB	Office of Management and Budget
EITC	Earned Income Tax Credits	OUD	Opioid Use Disorder
ENTICE	Environment and Nature Training Institute	PCF	Peace Corps Fellow
	for Conservation Education	POP	Point of Presence
ESSA	Every Students Succeeds Act	PRA	Partnership for a Rural America
FCAE	Facilitating Coordination in Agricultural	PTAC	Procurement Technical Assistance Center
	Education	RRFF	Reverse Resource Funding Fair
FDA	Food and Drug Administration	RTAC	Rural Transit Assistance Center
FFA	Future Farmers of America	SBDC	Small Business Development Center
GRAC	Governor's Rural Affairs Council	SET	Stronger Economies Together
HPSH	Health Professional Shortage Areas	SHIP	Senior Health Insurance Program
HVC	Hepatitis C Virus	SIU SOM	Southern Illinois University School of
IAHTF	Illinois Affordable Housing Trust Fund		Medicine.
ICCB	Illinois Community College Board	SLRP	State Loan Repayment Program
ICCT	Interagency Coordinating Council for	STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math
	Transportation	TANF	Temporary Assistance to Needy Families
IDES	Illinois Department of Employment Security	USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
IDHS	Illinois Department of Human Services	VASDC	Value-Added Sustainable Development
IDOA	Illinois Department of Agriculture	===	Center
IDOC	Illinois Department of Corrections	WESP	Workforce Education and Strategic Plan
IDOT	Illinois Department of Transportation	WIB	Workforce Investment Board
IDPH	Illinois Department of Public Health	WIOA	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
IEPA	Illinois Environmental Protection Agency	WIU	Western Illinois University
IFA	Illinois Finance Authority	WOTC	Work Opportunity Tax Credit
IHDA	Illinois Housing Development Authority		

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Governor's Executive Order requires that the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs (IIRA) at Western Illinois University (WIU) submit a report each year documenting the economic and social conditions affecting rural Illinois. The IIRA does this in collaboration with the Governor's Rural Affairs Council (GRAC), chaired by the Lieutenant Governor.

The 2017 report unfolds in four parts. Part one outlines the history of the GRAC. Part two summarizes major trends affecting rural communities in the State. Part three explains the formation and work of four working groups comprised of GRAC members. This section further outlines the policy priorities of each working group, and the efforts of each group to address these policy issues. Part four provides short vignettes documenting the achievements by GRAC members in promoting rural development in Illinois.

The main issues affecting rural communities described in part two of the report include population decline, unemployment, economic development issues including wage and income stagnation, workforce development, health care access, and the challenges confronting rural public school education. Rural Illinois has experienced long term population decline.

In 1990, Illinois nonmetropolitan counties had 1,534,076 people. By 2015, that population declined to 1,487,454. From this population decline stems several other themes related to economic and demographic stagnation – and the need to identify innovative strategies to improve the quality of life in rural communities. This part of the report also briefly summarizes work done by the Office of the Lt. Governor on the modernization of local government in Illinois. This work has important implications for rural government.

From this overview, several themes become clear. Rural Illinois has lagged behind urban areas since the Great Recession. Manufacturing jobs have been lost. Poverty rates have increased, and there is a growing wage gap between rural and urban communities. There is also a growing gap in health care access and educational attainment. Furthermore, a surfeit of local government units in Illinois complicates the effective delivery of services in rural areas of the state.

In responding to these challenges, it is clear that it will be increasingly difficult for rural communities to receive financial assistance from Springfield and Washington to solve local problems. The GRAC formed four working groups to identify local and regional solutions that promote local resilience while relying on external sources for assistance. The four working group described in part three of the report include:

- Economic Development Working Group;
- Workforce Development Working Group;
- Health Care Working Group; and
- Education Working Group.

Part four of the report documents how state agencies are working alone, but also in partnership with other agencies, communities, and the private sector to also tackle the challenges confronting rural Illinois. State agencies are attempting to identify solutions based on the latest technology (e.g. telehealth initiatives spearheaded by the Southern Illinois University School of Medicine and distance education promoted by the Illinois State Board of Education) and with an underlying philosophy of encouraging self-sufficiency (e.g. Homeownership promoted by the Illinois Housing Development Authority). Agencies are also collaborating in innovative ways to more effectively deliver government services to rural areas. A key example here are the Reverse Resource Funding Fairs (RRFFs) hosted by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)—Rural Development Office, with support from the IIRA. The RRFF idea starts with the premise that rural communities have many good development ideas. However, rural communities are confronted with the daunting task of traveling to Springfield to pitch an idea multiple times to different individual state agencies.

To solve this time-consuming logistical challenge, the RRFF brings multiple agencies together (e.g. Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, the USDA office for Rural Development, Illinois Department of Transportation, and the Illinois State Treasurer's Office, among others) at one site so that a community can present an idea once to several local, state, and federal agencies at the same time. USDA and the IIRA have already hosted three RRFFs in Peoria, Quincy, and Moline. More RRFFs are planned with one already scheduled for Effingham in fall 2017, and more to follow.

Recommendations from the report include that the state of Illinois, and constituent agencies and councils such as the GRAC continue to adopt a holistic approach to rural development that emphasizes the synergistic relationship between the agricultural and rural non-farm economy. In recognizing this mutually reinforcing relationship between the farming and rural non-farm economy, the report further emphasizes the importance of agencies working together to solve rural development issues, while building on rural assets to improve the quality of life in rural Illinois. Finally, the report urges policy makers and residents of Illinois to recognize the challenging budgetary times facing us at the federal and state level. This means helping rural Illinois communities to become more resilient and adept at promoting community and economic development at the local level, knowing that there are fewer resources available to spur development at the state and federal level.

PART I. INTRODUCTION

The Only Constant is Change

This report surveys conditions in rural Illinois and describes the activities of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council (GRAC), and its constituent members, to address those issues. In reviewing the current conditions of rural Illinois, a paradox emerges between the ways in which rural places are perceived versus the way life is actually experienced in those rural places. On the one hand, there is a certain constancy in the enviable way that rural places and rural residents have been portrayed in American society. Thomas Jefferson called on yeoman farmers to serve as the moral and economic foundation for American democracy. Two centuries later, popular media continues to portray "rural" through images of bucolic farms and small towns with bustling main streets (Thompson 2012). Even the new Illinois license plate has a windmill on it. Somehow, rural values and rural communities still matter and convey a positive, authentic, and optimistic message.

But this persistent idyllic imagery of farms and rural places masks the reality that rural America, and Illinois, have been radically, and oft-times painfully transformed over the past century. And during this tumult, a gap has emerged between the way rural versus urban life is experienced as America has become a predominantly urban society. In 1790, an estimated 90 percent of Americans lived on farms. By 1900, that number hovered around 40 percent. By 2000, that number had dropped below two percent (Wood 2008, 3).

Innovation and the mechanization of agriculture drove this demographic transformation. As farmers adopted gas-powered tractors and combines, the amount of farm labor dropped. As the need for farm labor declined, so did the rural population. The demographic decline was accelerated by the so-called technological "treadmill" that transformed agriculture (Levins and Cochrane 1996). As farmers adopted new technology, farm productivity increased. But improving productivity increased the supply of farm commodities, which suppressed crop prices. In order to remain profitable, the most competitive farmers invested in new technologies, the cost of which was amortized over increasingly large farms. This again increased productivity, suppressing commodity prices, further narrowing profit margins — which sparked another round of investment in technology. Cochrane (1993, 417) calls this endless cycle of innovation, investment, enhanced productivity, price and profit margin suppression, leading to another round of investment, farm labor displacement and farm size increase, the technological "treadmill." And Illinois has been at the epicenter of this treadmill because key farm implement innovators such as John Deere, Farmall, International Harvester, and Caterpillar Tractor were, or continue to be, located in Illinois.

In addition to coping with the travails of unpredictable weather, technological innovation, and population decline, American farmers and rural communities were subjected to increasingly intense market forces and the unintentional consequences of American foreign policy, especially after the Second World War. During the New Deal of the 1930s, farm insurance and subsidy programs were put in place to help stabilize commodity prices for farmers. Rural communities were integrated into a modern national economy through rural electrification and farm-to-market road construction. But geopolitical changes in the 1970s such as détente between the United States and communist countries such as the Soviet Union and China set up American farmers for the Farm Crisis of the 1980s. When Soviet and Chinese grain markets opened up in the 1970s, American Secretary of Agriculture Earl Butz exhorted farmers to "plant hedgerow to hedgerow" and to "get big or get out" (quoted in Philpott 2008). Farmers heeded this call and took on debt to purchase new land and machinery to meet increased demand.

For several years during the 1970s, Midwestern corn farmers flourished as productivity and commodity prices continued to increase. But the prosperity of the 1970s was followed by the Farm Crisis of the 1980s. The first blow came when President Carter cut trade to the Soviet Union to punish it for invading Afghanistan. With this market closed, commodity prices dropped. In an effort to combat high levels of unemployment and inflation that started in the late 1970s, Presidents Carter and then Reagan rejected the Keynesian economic policies that shaped American economic policy during the postwar period. Instead, the Federal Government adopted a monetarist approach by dramatically increasing interest rates, which soared from 6.8 percent in 1976 to 18.5 percent in 1981 (Lipietz 1987; Orr 1987).

While this policy did check inflation and reduced unemployment, it devastated farmers who had borrowed heavily during the 1970s. No longer able to pay the high interest on their loans, many farmers declared bankruptcy across the Midwest. This had a ripple effect on the non-farm economy, too. Banks with too many bad loans closed their doors (Stam, Koenig, Bentley, and Gale 1991). Main street businesses in rural communities also suffered economic decline (Ginder, Stone, and Otto 1985). The Farm Crisis accelerated the downward demographic trends that had transformed much of the rural Midwest. The Farm Crisis devastated many rural communities. It was also a wakeup call for many rural community stakeholders. In Illinois, the response to the Farm Crisis was to create the GRAC.

Origins of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council

While the seeds of the Farm Crisis were sown in the 1970s, the worst impacts of the Farm Crisis weren't felt until the middle of the 1980s. It is hard to pinpoint the exact year when rural communities were hardest hit. It varied depending on the community and which metric one used to measure economic hardship. Some reports suggest that the worst aspects of the Farm Crisis were felt between 1985 and 1986 (Orr 1987; Stam, Koenig, Bentley, and Gale 1991). In September 1985, the Farm Aid outdoor concert was held at University of Illinois Memorial Stadium. It featured musicians such as Willy Nelson, Johnny Cash, and Bob Dylan who wanted to bring national attention to the plight of Midwestern farmers and rural communities (Green 2012).

It was during this time too, that elected officials in Illinois decided to take direct action to address the Farm Crisis in Illinois. In 1986, Illinois Governor James R. Thompson launched the Task Force on the Future of Rural Illinois (Governor's Rural Affairs Council 2015). Chaired by Lt. Governor George H. Ryan the task force convened 22 public hearings, and visited with elected official and residents in 97 small communities in 60 of the 102 counties in Illinois (Walzer and Merrett 2014). The task force compiled its findings and issued its final report in March 1987.

At the same time the Rural Illinois Task Force was crisscrossing Illinois in 1986 and 1987, Governor Thompson promulgated two executive orders in October 1986. He first signed Executive Order #6, which created the Rural Fair Share Initiative (Walzer and Merrett 2014). This executive order recognized that while 26% of the Illinois population lived in the 76 non-metropolitan counties, they did not receive an equivalent amount of state resources to support infrastructure and economic development initiatives. This initiative required that all state agencies report the proportion of their resources that were being spent in the 76 non-metro counties.

Governor Thompson then signed Executive Order #7 establishing the GRAC. The GRAC was intended to operationalize the Rural Fair Share Initiative. The GRAC was designed to serve as a forum for state agencies to work together to elevate rural issues before state government. By state agencies working together, the GRAC could develop more consistent policies to better serve rural regions, and help coordinate the way services were delivered by the Department of Commerce and Community Affairs (the forerunner of today's Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity), and the Illinois Department of Agriculture (Governor's Rural Affairs Council 2015).

Implementing the GRAC was an incremental process. As noted above, the Task Force submitted its final report in March 1987 which contained a series of official recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly. In addition to the already established Rural Fair Share Initiative and the GRAC, the final report recommended the passage of the Rural Diversification Act, and the creation of four research and technical assistance centers including the Office of Rural Community Development, the Center for Value-Added Agriculture, the Center for Forestry Industry Development, and the IIRA, to be located at WIU. The General Assembly, with the Governor's approval, implemented all of these recommendations (Governor's Rural Affairs Council 2015).

The IIRA eventually opened its doors on the WIU campus in 1989. It joined 11 other state agencies to become a charter member of the GRAC. The GRAC, chaired by Lt. Governor Ryan, was comprised of 12 state agencies that regularly delivered programs affecting communities in rural Illinois. These agencies included the Illinois Department of Agriculture, Department of Commerce and Community Affairs, Department of Conservation, Department of Energy and Natural Resources, Department of Mines and Minerals, Department of Transportation, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA), Illinois Development Finance Authority, Illinois Farm Development Authority, Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA), University of Illinois, and the IIRA (Governor's Rural Affairs Council 2015).

In 1991, Executive Order 13 issued by Governor Jim Edgar stipulated that the GRAC, chaired by the Lt. Governor, issue an annual report providing an overview of economic conditions in rural Illinois. The Executive Order specifically assigned the IIRA the task of compiling the report on behalf of the GRAC. In 2011, Executive Order 11-4 reconfirmed that the IIRA be responsible for producing an annual report on behalf of the GRAC (Appendix A and B).

The GRAC has evolved over the past 31 years. Overall funding for the GRAC has decreased over time. And since the memory of the Farm Crisis has faded over the decades, one could argue that rural issues have received less attention from government agencies and elected officials as Illinois has become an increasingly urban state (McDermott 2013).

And yet one could also argue that despite GRAC budget cuts and the increasing urbanization of the state, GRAC commitment to rural communities has never wavered. In fact, its membership has increased over time with other state and federal agencies requesting to become members. In 2011, Governor Pat Quinn rejuvenated the GRAC when he issued Executive Order 11-4. The executive order charged the GRAC "to develop and implement strategies for improving delivery of State of Illinois services to rural Illinois and to expand opportunities and enhance the quality of life for rural residents" (Appendix B). By this time, the GRAC membership had expanded to 18 member agencies and nonprofit organizations, and five citizen members.

The current administration has shown an even greater commitment to rural issues. Under the leadership of Lt. Governor Sanguinetti, the GRAC has expanded its membership to include the 18 member agencies/organizations from the previous administration, but also includes six citizen members, and two *ex-officio* members representing the Center for Governmental Studies at Northern Illinois University and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Illinois office of Rural Development (see list on page iii).

Following a 102 county fact-finding tour, Lt. Governor Sanguinetti created the following four working groups to further spur interagency collaboration: Rural Healthcare Working Group, Rural Education Working Group, Rural Workforce Development Working Group, and Rural Economic Development Working Group. Each working group is populated by a diverse group of GRAC members to help provide wide-ranging perspectives.

The purpose of the GRAC continues to be resolving the paradox explored at the beginning of this section of the report. Rural places have long history of being portrayed as wholesome, and serving as symbols of what is right about America. However, a gap has emerged between the perception of rural places as having a good quality of life, and the reality which is sometimes far different. The GRAC is working hard to narrow the gap between perception and reality.

The remainder of this report attempts to achieve three goals. First, it provides some economic and demographic data to provide a snapshot of how rural Illinois is faring. The data show that rural Illinois is actually vary diverse, but that common themes can be identified, including population decline, stagnant incomes, and a shrinking labor market.

Second, the report documents the progress being made by the four working groups to address issues such as health care access, job creation, workforce needs, and challenges confronting rural education. In addition to the focus on the four working groups, the report also focuses on the issue of local government modernization and consolidation. Illinois has the highest number of local government units, which creates redundancy in services, unnecessary taxes, and economic inefficiencies, which hinder rural economic development. The underlying premise is that rural economic development requires diverse strategies. And the GRAC with its diverse membership is an important advocate for this holistic approach.

The third and final goal is to provide a set of short vignettes providing examples of how each GRAC member agencies is also providing services to rural Illinois. Local, state, and federal agencies are working alone, but also in partnership to solve rural development challenges, and to build on rural community assets to improve the quality of life for the residents of rural Illinois.

PART II. ECONOMIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC SUMMARY OF RURAL ILLINOIS

Defining Rural Illinois

There is no simple, single way to define "rural" in the United States (Cromartie and Bucholtz 2008). To support this point, the Census Bureau acknowledges that identifying "the line between urban and rural can be a complex task" (Ratcliffe, Burd, Holder, and Fields 2016, 2). The most common definition is provided by the federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB), which uses population size to categorize counties as being either urban (metropolitan) or rural (nonmetropolitan). In 2003, the OMB defined rural counties as those outside Metropolitan Statistical Areas (counties linked to city or twin cities with populations of 50,000 or more). Using this standard, 76 of the 102 Illinois counties were defined as rural or nonmetropolitan in 1991. By 2003, the number of rural counties dropped to 66 as Illinois has become a more urban state (Fig. 1). This report continues to use the 2003 definition for rural to distinguish between metro and nonmetropolitan counties in Illinois.

The decision to maintain the 2003 definition is driven by at least two factors. First, maintaining this decision allows us to make economic and demographic comparisons over time. Second, it is clear that some rural counties have been relabeled as urban counties despite losing population. This has occurred because workers in the newly relabeled metropolitan counties have increasingly commuted to adjacent metropolitan counties. The Census Bureau considers commuting zones as it decides whether to identify a county as being either metropolitan or non-metropolitan. Jackson County in southern Illinois is a good example of this situation. Its population peaked in 1980 at 61,522. Its population in 2000 was 59,612, and was identified as a non-metropolitan county using the OMB 2003 standards. After the 2010 Census, Jackson County was identified as a metropolitan county, even though its 2010 population of 60,210 was lower than its 1980 population (Reinhold 2015). The reason the Census Bureau changed Jackson County's status was because neighboring Williamson County had experienced population growth and Jackson County residents were increasingly commuting to jobs in neighboring Williamson County. These are the kinds of details and processes that make it challenging to define whether specific areas should be classified as being either rural or urban.

Changing Conditions in Rural Illinois

Change has been a constant in the economics and demographics of Illinois. Unlike urban areas in Illinois which have largely experienced constant, if slow, growth during the latter half of twentieth century, rural counties have had a much more diverse experience. In order to summarize the diverse experiences of rural Illinois, this report focuses on four issues:

- Population change in rural versus urban counties;
- Economic development indicators including wages, unemployment, and work force issues;
- Education, including educational attainment and expenditures; and
- Health care access and outcomes on some key issues.

Population Change in Rural versus Urban Counties

Several trends are summarized in the following tables and charts. Table 1 compares urban versus rural population change over the past 65 years. Table 2 and a chart document the changing farm demographics that have helped to spur rural outmigration (Table 2, Fig. 2). Table 3 takes the long view to show the varying demographic trajectories experienced by rural counties over the past century.

Jo Daviess Stephenson Winnebago McHenry Lake Carroll Ogle Kane DeKalb DuPage Whiteside Cook Kendall Will Rock Island Henry LaSalle Grundy Putnam Stark Marshall Livingston Warren Woodford Peoria Iroquois Ford **Fulton** Tazewell McLean McDonough Mason De Witt Schuyle Vermilion Champaign Logan Menard Adams Piatt Brown Cass Macon Douglas Sangamon Morgan Edgar Pike Moultrie Christian Coles Shelby Greene Clark Montgomery Cumberland Macoupin Jersey Effingham Fayette Crawford Bond Madison Lawrence Richland Marion Clinton St. Edwards Clair Wayne Washington Jefferson Monroe White & Randolph Perry Hamilton Metropolitan County Franklin Non Metropolitan County Jackson Gallatin Williamson Saline Hardin Union Johnson Pope Alexander United States Census Bureau /Metropolitan and Micropolitan Area Reference Files. Web. 26 June 2017 http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/metro- micro/geographies/geographic-reference-files.html>.

Figure 1. Nonmetropolitan Counties in Illinois

Table 1. Population Trends Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Counties

Goographic Area	Total Population				Percent (%) Change				
Geographic Area	1990	2000	2010	2015	2016	1990-2000	2000-2010	2010-2015	2015-2016
Illinois	11,430,602	12,419,927	12,830,632	12,859,995	12,801,539	8.7	3.3	0.2	-0.4
Metropolitan									
Chicago Metro	7,410,858	8,273,268	8,586,609	8,679,563		11.6	3.8	1.1	
Downstate Metro	2,485,668	2,587,973	2,715,596	2,692,978		4.1	4.9	-0.8	
Total Metro	9,896,526	10,861,241	11,302,205	11,372,541	11,323,994	8.9	3.9	0.6	-0.4
Non-metro									
Micropolitan	896,103	917,651	904,596	879,634		2.4	-1.4	-2.8	
Rural	637,973	641,035	623,831	607,820		0.5	-2.7	-2.6	
Total Non-metro	1,534,076	1,558,686	1,528,427	1,487,454	1,477,545	1.6	-2.0	-2.7	-0.7

Source: Parker (2017) and U.S. Census Bureau (2010).

Table 2. Farms and Average Farm Size in Illinois, 1950 to 2017

Year	Number of	Percent	Average Farm
	Farms	Decline	Size (Acres)
1950	203,000		156
1960	159,000	-21.7	193
1970	128,000	-19.5	230
1980	107,000	-16.4	269
1990	83,000	-22.4	342
1997	76,000	-8.4	368
2002	73,000	-3.9	374
2007	76,000	+4.1	348
2012	75,000	-1.3	359
2017	72,200	-3.7	358

Source: Illinois Department of Agriculture (2017) and USDA (2012).

Figure 2. Number of Farms and Average Farm Size in Illinois, 1950 to 2017

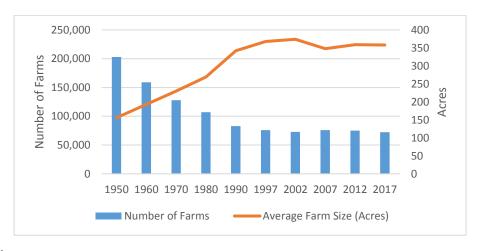


Table 3. Current and Peak Year Population for 66 Illinois Non-Metro Counties, Sorted by Year of Peak Population.

County	Peak Population Year	Peak Population	Population Estimate 2016	Current Population as a % of Peak Population
1. Hancock	1870	35,935	18,508	51.5
2. Henderson	1870	12,582	6,869	54.6
3. Jo Daviess	1870	27,820	21,770	78.3
4. Schuyler	1870	17,419	6,923	39.7
5. Brown	1880	13,041	6,762	51.9
6. Pike	1880	33,751	15,950	47.3
7. Scott	1880	10,741	5,053	47.0
8. Washington	1880	21,112	14,154	67.0
9. Greene	1890	23,791	13,093	55.0
10. Pope	1890	14,016	4,157	29.7
11. Clark	1900	24,033	15,938	66.3
12. Clay	1900	19,553	13,300	68.0
13. Cumberland	1900	16,124	10,858	67.3
14. Edgar	1900	28,273	17,566	62.1
15. Edwards	1900	10,345	6,523	63.1
16. Gallatin	1900	15,836	5,212	32.9
17. Hamilton	1900	20,197	8,061	39.9
18. Iroquois	1900	38,014	28,334	74.5
19. Jasper	1900	20,160	9,536	47.3
20. Johnson	1900	15,667	12,902	82.4
21. Livingston	1900	42,035	36,526	86.9
22. Moultrie	1900	15,224	14,827	97.4
23. Shelby	1900	32,126	21,717	67.6
24. Union	1900	22,610	17,212	76.1
25. Wayne	1900	27,626	16,396	59.3
26. White	1900	25,386	14,292	56.3
27. Bureau	1910	43,975	33,359	75.9
28. Crawford	1910	26,281	19,308	73.5
29. Fulton	1910	49,549	35,536	71.7
30. Lawrence	1910	22,661	16,377	72.3
31. Wabash	1910	14,913	11,492	77.1
32. Warren	1910	23,313	17,378	74.5
33. Cass	1920	17,896	12,676	70.8

County	Peak Population Year	Peak Population	Population Estimate 2016	Current Population as a % of Peak Population
34. DeWitt	1920	19,252	16,226	84.2
35. Montgomery	1920	41,403	28,952	69.9
36. Putnam	1920	7,579	5,611	74.0
37. Saline	1920	38,353	24,307	63.4
38. Franklin	1930	59,442	39,156	65.9
39. Alexander	1940	25,496	6,478	25.4
40. Fayette	1940	29,159	21,789	74.7
41. Hardin	1940	7,759	4,024	51.9
42. Marion	1940	47,989	38,140	79.5
43. Perry	1940	23,438	21,357	91.1
44. Pulaski	1940	15,875	5,619	35.4
45. Christian	1950	38,816	33,309	85.8
46. Carroll	1960	19,507	14,539	74.5
47. Lee	1960	38,749	34,251	88.4
48. Logan	1960	33,656	29,527	87.7
49. Adams	1980	71,622	66,578	93.0
50. Jackson	1980	61,522	58,870	96.7
51. Knox	1980	61,607	50,938	82.7
52. Mason	1980	19,492	13,507	69.3
53. McDonough	1980	37,467	30,996	82.7
54. Morgan	1980	37,502	34,277	91.4
55. Randolph	1980	35,652	32,621	91.5
56. Richland	1980	17,587	15,930	90.6
57. Stephenson	1980	49,536	45,624	92.1
58. Whiteside	1980	65,970	56,536	85.7
59. Jefferson	2000	40,045	38,460	96.0
60. Coles	2010	53,873	52,343	97.2
61. Douglas	2010	19,980	19,630	98.2
62. LaSalle	2010	113,924	110,642	97.1
63. Massac	2010	15,429	14,658	95.0
64. Ogle	2010	53,497	51,273	95.8
65. Effingham	2016	34,386	34,386	100.0
66. Williamson	2016	67,560	67,560	100.0

Source: Forstall (1995) and US Census (2016).

From these these tables, a number of trends can be identified. First, it is clear that urban counties in Illinois have grown faster than their rural counterparts for decades. Hence, Illinois has became an increasingly urban state. This was highlighted in 2003, when the number of non-metropolitan counties in Illinois was lowered from 76 to 66. Looking more closely at the data from the past decade shows that larger rural counties and smaller metro areas experienced the slowest growth. This can be attributed in part to the impacts of the Great Recession. Larger rural counties and smaller cities host many small to medium-sized manufacturers which were hit hard in the previous decade. A final point to note about the first table is that Illinois as a state lost overall population over the past year or so. But even here, we see that rural counties lost population at a faster rate than urban areas. A cartographical representation of population change since 2000 shows that rural counties experienced the greatest population declines, with the most remote rural counties in southern and western Illinois being the hardest hit (Fig. 3).

While much of this report focuses on the rural non-farm economy, agriculture is still an important part of the rural economy. It is not just the farms, but manufacturing jobs related to agriculture including farm implement manufacturing, food processing, biofuels, transportation, and among many other sectors. But as figures in this report show, the technological treadmill has had an impact in rural Illinois. Between 1950 and 2017, the number of farms in Illinois decreased by almost two thirds from 203,000 to 72,000. Average farm size has more than doubled (Table 2, Fig. 2). The impact of the Farm Crisis can also be seen in the period between 1980 and 1990 when the percentage decline in farmers was at its highest since the Second World War. It's this kind of decline that has spurred rural outmigration across the state. The ripple effect impacts farm implement dealers, local retail stores, churches, hospitals, and schools. As the number of farm families decline, so does demand for many goods and services. This drives a negative spiral of economic and demographic stagnation.

When taking a longer view of rural population demographics, it becomes clear that rural Illinois is a diverse place that needs a diverse set of community and economic development strategies (Table 3). There are 32 of the 66 rural counties in Illinois with populations that peaked more than a century ago, that is, with population peaks in 1910 or earlier. Some of these counties such as Pike, Scott, and Pope have lost more than half of their peak populations. These counties share in common a narrow economic base with natural resource extraction (e.g. agriculture or mining) as their primary industry. Depopulation occurred as agriculture and mining shed workers through mechanization (Runyon 2017a).

Other rural counties such as Adams, Knox, and McDonough experienced peak populations much later in the twentieth century because of their more diversified economies, with manufacturing and higher education playing a key role in their population growth and relative stability up until recently (Table 3). Finally, there are a small number of rural counties that are currently peaking or peaked in the last decade. These counties share in common the fact that interstates such as I-70 and I-57 (e.g. Effingham, Coles, Douglas) and I-39 and I-88 (e.g. Ogle) pass through them (Table 3).

Here is a final comment about the impact of farm number decline on rural demographics. After a half-century of farm decline, there has been a stabilization of sorts (Table 4). This has occurred due to a bifurcation in the distribution of farm size as measured by acres and total sales. Illinois is experiencing a hollowing out in the number of mid-sized farms in the 500 to 1,000 acre range. While the overall number of farms continues a downward trend, growth is occurring among the number and proportion of very small and very large-sized farms as measured by both acreage and sales. This is still being driven by the technological treadmill. The most profitable farms are getting bigger and bigger as part of their survival strategy.

Figure 3. Population Change, 2000 to 2016

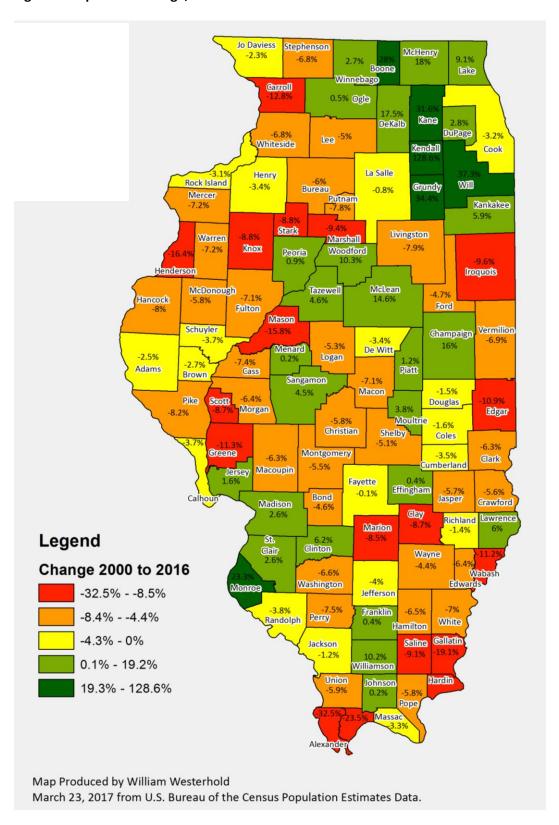


Table 4. Farm by Farm Size and Farms by Sales, as Percent of Total Farms, 2002 to 2012

Farms by size (percent of total farms)	2002	2007	2012
1 to 99 acres	41.0	50.7	49.8
100 to 499 acres	35.0	28.3	29.8
500 to 999 acres	13.5	10.8	10.1
1000 to 1,999 acres	8.1	7.2	7.0
2000 or more acres	2.4	3.0	3.3
Farms by sales, current dollars (percent of total farms)	2002	2007	2012
Less than \$9,999	41.4	46.9	45.5
\$10,000 to \$49,999	20.9	14.7	13.9
\$50,000 to \$99,999	11.0	8.1	7.5
\$100,000 to \$499,999	22.8	21.0	20.4
More than \$500,000	3.9	9.3	12.7

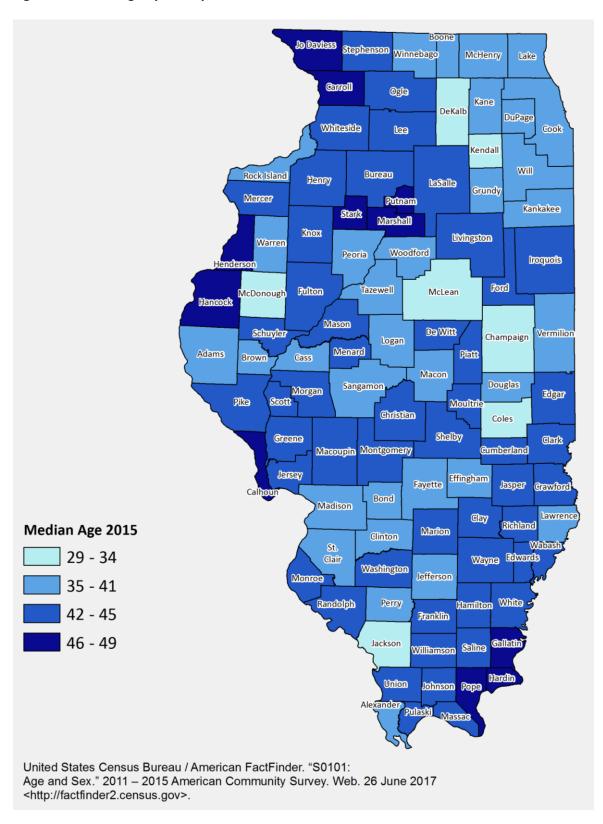
Source: Parker (2017).

While farms earning over \$500,000 per year represent an increasingly large share of the farm population, very small farms are also growing dramatically. Farms smaller than 100 acres, or earning less than \$10,000 per year, are a growing part of the Illinois landscape. This is driven by several factors. First, many rural residents are hobby farmers with full-time jobs elsewhere. However, they enjoy the farm lifestyle and enjoy raising fresh produce for local markets or personal consumption. Many farmers have been lured into small-scale farming due to the increasing popularity of the local foods movement, community supported agriculture, and a growing popular interest in eating health, organic produce.

Farm implement manufacturers have struggled to compete, with fewer farmers purchasing larger pieces of equipment. However, the growing importance of hobby farms and the local foods movement has dramatically increased the demand for small tractors and other smaller scale implements (Association of Equipment Manufacturers 2016; John Deere 2016, 5). Hence, farm implement manufacturers have had to recalibrate their marketing strategies. They are selling fewer implements to the larger farm operators. But they continue to profit by selling more compact tractors to hobbyists and local foods enthusiasts. Just as farming evolves, farm implement manufacturers have to evolve too. The technological treadmill drives changes on the farm, but sometimes changes in society such as increased demand for local foods changes farm technology. A final point about more small farms, is the need for farmers to have off-farm employment. It buttresses the point that rural economic development requires diverse strategies to support farms and rural non-farm occupations.

The major point about the rural population is that it has lagged behind urban counties for the past century, and it continues to do so. One of the features of rural outmigration is that it tends to be the younger people who leave. This means that the median age of the residents in rural counties will be higher than that of urban counties (Fig. 4). Of course, there are exceptions such as McDonough, Jackson, and Coles Counties, which host universities and students with low median ages. However, the general rule is that rural counties in Illinois have a higher median age. This has consequences for economic and workforce development. As young people leave, it is increasingly difficult to recruit workers, who would rather live in larger cities with more opportunities (Chinni 2017). As rural residents age, it also has impacts on the rural health care system, which is notably less robust than urban health care systems.

Figure 4. Median Age by County, 2015



Economic Conditions in Rural Illinois

As noted in the introduction, rural places have an image problem. Most Americans living in cities imagine barns, silos, and corn when they think of rural Midwestern landscapes. Of course, they aren't entirely wrong. When you drive across rural Illinois, one sees acres upon acres of corn and soybeans. It is not surprising that urban Americans and even urban Illinoisans believe agriculture dominates the rural economy. However, closer analysis shows that rural Illinois is a diverse economic space (Table 5).

In a review of how Illinoisans earn a living, it is not surprising to see that the proportion of workers in the agriculture and mining sector represent a larger proportion of the work force in rural counties than in urban counties. What is surprising, is to see how important manufacturing employment is in rural places. Census data from 2015 shows that manufacturing employees represent a higher percentage of workers in rural counties (14.8%) than in urban counties (12.3%) (Table 5). There are many rural counties that have important manufacturing facilities such as General Electric, which manufactures lighting products in Mattoon (Coles County). Located in Quincy (Adams County), the Knapheide Manufacturing Company employs over 1,000 workers, who build truck bodies. Pella Windows in Macomb (McDonough County) employs over 400 workers. Lincolnland Agri-energy in Palestine (Crawford County) employees 32 workers who convert corn to ethanol. In Milledgeville, Illinois (Carroll County), thirty employees produce plastic products for Carroll Industrial Molds. Just about every rural county in Illinois has a manufacturer of some sort. This points to the ongoing importance of implementing rural economic development strategies that focus on more than just agriculture.

The importance of a diverse economic development strategy can be seen in Illinois as it struggled to recover from the Great Recession (Rust 2016). Data from across the Midwest shows that many rural counties lost manufacturing jobs over the past decade (Fig. 5). Those jobs have been lost as companies moved production to Mexico and Asia, as factories downsized in response to the Great Recession, and as firms replaced workers through automation (Broughton 2014; Mattoon and Haasl 2016). Illinois recovered more slowly than neighboring states, and rural Illinois recovered more slowly than urban Illinois, because, in part, commodity prices for corn and soybeans have dropped just as Illinois began to emerge from the Great Recession (Oppedahl 2016; Schwarz and Creswell 2015). The commodity price drop has compounded the manufacturing challenges confronted by the rural economy.

The fact that rural counties continue to lag between urban areas can be seen in several ways. First, recent unemployment data shows that the highest rates are clustered in rural counties in the southern and western parts of the state (Fig. 6). Indexed data comparing job growth through the Great Recession up until the beginning of 2016 shows that rural areas have not rebounded to the same extent as urban areas. As noted above, rural areas are affected both by stagnating manufacturing and agriculture, which is hampered by dropping commodity prices (Fig. 7). The fact that rural areas struggle economically more than urban areas, both more recently, and over the long term, can be seen in the accompanying map and the time series chart showing the growing rural versus urban wage gap (Fig. 8 and Fig. 9).

A consequence of the growing wage gap between rural versus urban counties are the higher poverty rates found in rural Illinois (Fig. 10 and Table 6). Figure 10 provides a deeper insight into this poverty data. By showing data at the census tract level, we can see profound differences even within counties. There are four rural, blue counties that fall entirely within the highest poverty rate quartile. There is only one red, urban county that falls within the highest poverty rate quartile. All other counties show significant differences in poverty even within counties.

Table 5. Illinois Metro and Non-metro Employment by Sector, 2015

	Total Number of Persons Employed 16 Years and Older					
Employment Sector	Illinois	Illinois Metro	Illinois Nonmetro	Illinois	Illinois Metro	Illinois Nonmetro
Civilian employed						
population 16 years and						
over	6,086,226	5,358,247	727,979	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing						
and hunting, and mining	64,380	30,484	33,896	1.1%	0.6%	4.7%
Construction	313,232	269,522	43,710	5.1%	5.0%	6.0%
Manufacturing	765,301	657,574	107,727	12.6%	12.3%	14.8%
Wholesale trade	184,522	164,539	19,983	3.0%	3.1%	2.7%
Retail trade	668,523	579,272	89,251	11.0%	10.8%	12.3%
Transportation and						
warehousing, and utilities	358,122	314,453	43,669	5.9%	5.9%	6.0%
Information	123,286	113,284	10,002	2.0%	2.1%	1.4%
Finance and insurance, and						
real estate and rental and						
leasing	446,219	411,450	34,769	7.3%	7.7%	4.8%
Professional, scientific, and						
management, and						
administrative and waste						
management services	695,791	656,550	39,241	11.4%	12.3%	5.4%
Educational services, and						
health care and social						
assistance	1,396,976	1,212,392	184,584	23.0%	22.6%	25.4%
Arts, entertainment, and						
recreation, and						
accommodation and food						
services	551,219	497,228	53,991	9.1%	9.3%	7.4%
Other services, except						
public administration	288,602	254,512	34,090	4.7%	4.7%	4.7%
Public administration	230,053	196,987	33,066	3.8%	3.7%	4.5%

Source: United States Census Bureau / American FactFinder. "DP03: SELECTED ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS." 2011 – 2015 American Community Survey. U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey Office, 2016. Web. 2 May 2017http://factfinder2.census.gov.

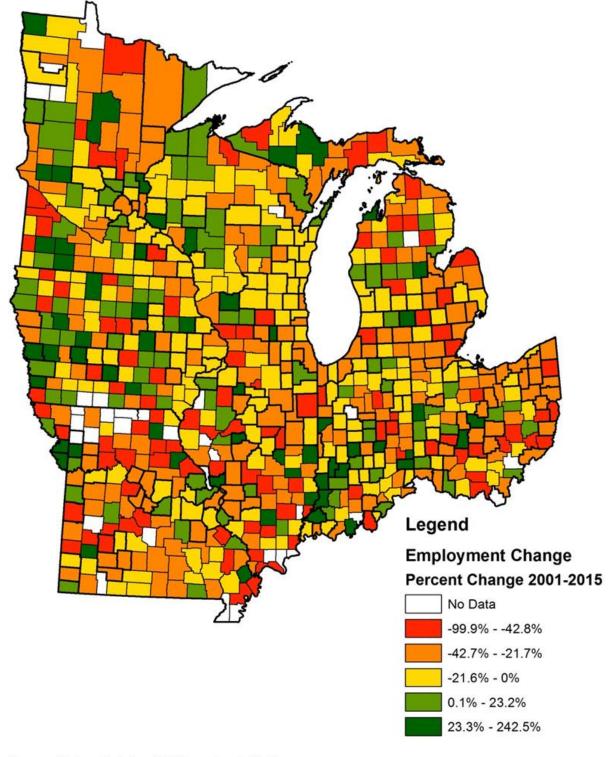


Figure 5. Percent Change in Manufacturing Employment, 2001 to 2015

Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, [January 29, 2015] data.bls.gov/qcew/].

Figure 6. Illinois Unemployment Rate, March 2017

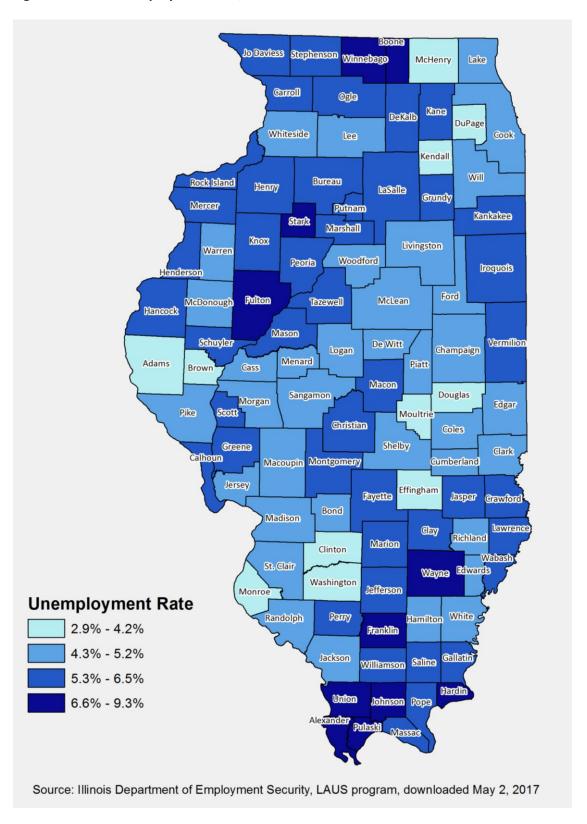


Figure 7. Job Growth in Illinois, Metro and non-Metro Counties, 2007 to 2015

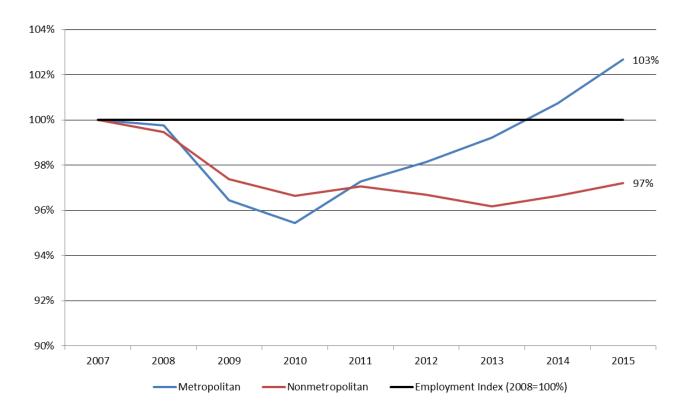


Figure 8. Real Average Wage per Job in Illinois Metro and non-Metro Counties, 1995 to 2015

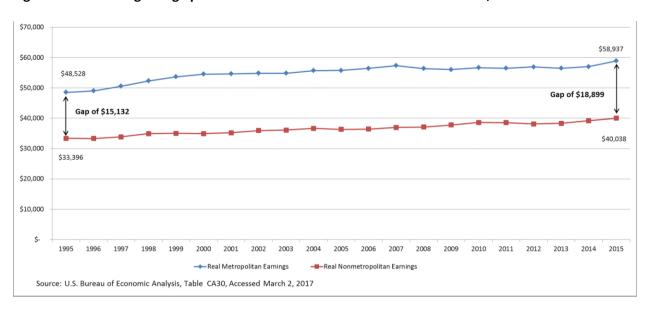


Figure 9. Median Household Income 2015

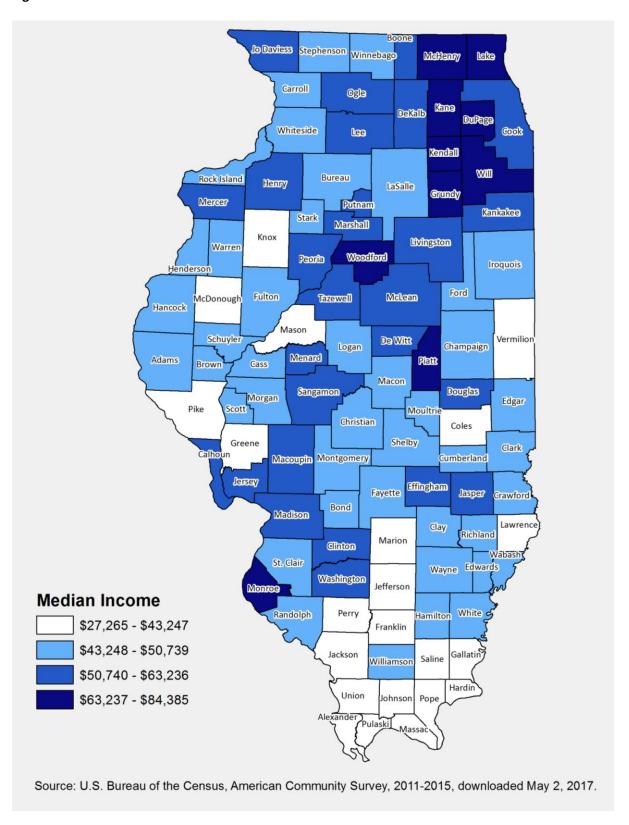


Figure 10. Rural Versus Urban Poverty in Illinois, by County and Census Tract, 2016

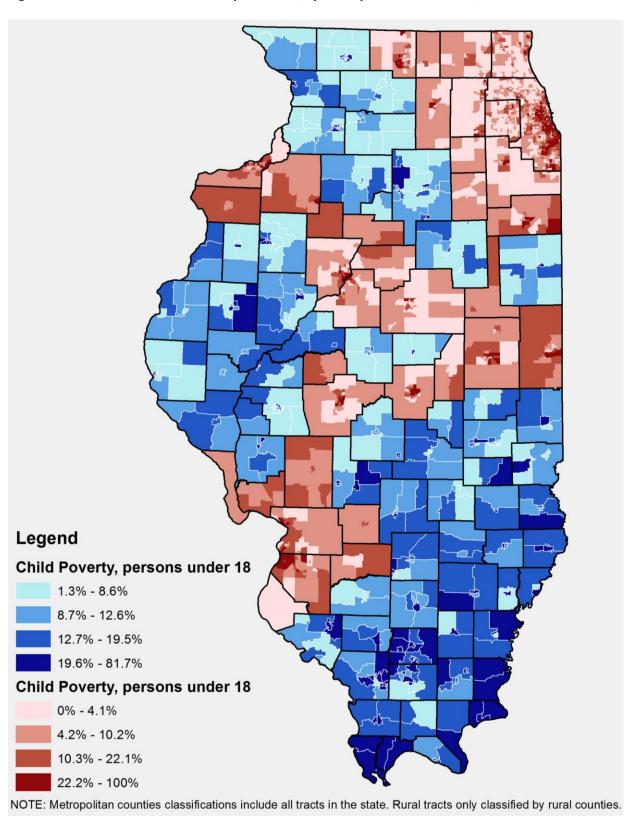


Table 6. Income Variables and Poverty Rate in Rural versus Urban Illinois Counties, 2015

Per-capita income (2015 dollars)	Rural*	Urban*	Total
2014	37,922	49,964	48,566
2015	37,762	51,934	50,295
Percent change	-0.4	3.9	3.6
Earnings per job (2015 dollars)	Rural*	Urban*	Total
2014	45,250	62,321	60,655
2015	42,865	63,645	61,645
Percent change	-5.3	2.1	1.6
Poverty rate (percent)	Rural*	Urban*	Total
1979	10.5	11.1	11.0
1989	13.3	11.7	11.9
1999	10.7	10.7	10.7
Poverty rate, American Community Survey (percent)	Rural*	Urban*	Total
2015	14.2	13.5	13.6

Source: Parker (2017).

Health Care and Health Care Access in Rural Illinois

The discussion about poverty above provides a neat segue into a discussion about health care in rural Illinois. Evidence shows that living in poverty has measurable and negative impacts on one's physical and mental health (Dobrin 2012; Lowrey 2014; Sanger-Katz 2015). This happens for a number of reasons. Poor individuals and families are less likely to eat healthy, have access to heart-healthy recreational opportunities, and have access to good quality health care (Chetty, Stepner and Abraham 2016).

The data portrayed above show that on average, rural counties have higher poverty rates than urban areas (Table 10 and Fig. 6). Not coincidentally, rural communities in Illinois have lower levels of health on a whole range of measures, including life expectancy (Dwyer-Lindgren, Bertozzi-Villa, and Stubbs 2017). And just like the income data, there is a growing gap in the in the health conditions of rural residents versus urban residents across the United States, and in Illinois (Chetty, Stepner and Abraham 2016; Boodhoo, Herman, Honigfort, and Keating 2016).

There are many factors driving the growing gap in health between rural and urban communities across the United States and in Illinois (Achenbach and Keating 2016). One explanation is connected to the Great Recession and the concomitant impact on working class family lives. Increased unemployment leads to higher rates of poverty. Unemployment and increased poverty leads to increased instances of mental health struggles such as depression and substance abuse, including alcohol, heroin, and prescription opioids, as people in rural communities struggle to cope with life (Talbot 2017).

A second factor is connected to the higher rates of manual labor employment in rural areas such as mining, manufacturing and agriculture, where physical injuries can occur. With fewer health care resources such as physical therapy, doctors rely to a greater extent on powerful painkillers to help injured workers manage their pain (Runyon 2017b).

A third factor can be related to fewer healthy options for recreation and eating in rural areas. Many rural counties have so-called "food deserts" where rural residents have to drive a long ways to purchase fresh fruit and vegetables. The USDA (2017) has created an interactive online mapping tool to identify food deserts across the United States. This map shows significant food desserts in inner city Chicago. It also identifies large swaths of west-central and southern Illinois as being covered by food deserts.

These challenges reported nationally are having a significant impact on rural Illinois. Data from the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) suggests that residents in rural counties are more likely to report struggles with mental health issues such as stress and depression (Fig. 11). Rural counties have experienced a dramatic increase in opioid-related deaths since 2010 (Fig. 12). We can see a disparity between rural and urban counties in access to primary health care (Fig. 13). Finally, the rural-urban differences in food security can be mapped (Fig. 14). These and other factors come together to explain why rural residents are less healthy than urban residents in Illinois.

Education in Rural Illinois

Education is yet another way that rural counties differ from urban ones. The first way to see these differences is educational attainment. Rural areas have a higher percentage of residents with only a high school education (Table 7). Census data shows that in contrast, urban areas have a higher proportion of its residents with a college degree. While the proportion of rural residents with a college degree has increased over time, it still remains only about half of the proportion of urban residents (Table 7). This gap can affect college choice and career trajectories.

Table 7. Educational Attainment in Illinois, Persons 25 and Over

Not completing high school	Rural	Urban	Total
1980	38.8	33.5	33.5
1990	27.6	23.2	23.8
2000	20.1	18.3	18.6
2011-2015	12.0	12.1	12.1
Completing high school only	Rural	Urban	Total
1980	40.0	35.1	35.1
1990	38.7	28.6	30.0
2000	37.8	26.2	27.7
2011-2015	37.0	25.4	26.8
Completing some college	Rural	Urban	Total
1980	11.7	15.2	15.2
1990	22.7	25.6	25.2
2000	28.6	27.5	27.6
2011-2015	33.8	28.1	28.8
Completing college	Rural	Urban	Total
1980	9.5	16.2	16.2
1990	11.0	22.6	21.0
2000	13.5	28.0	26.1
2011-2015	17.2	34.4	32.3

Source: Parker (2017).

This achievement gap can be measured in other ways, too. For example, a map of results from the ACT standardized college entrance exam shows that rural students perform less than well than urban ones (Fig. 15). Data from the College Board on how rural versus urban students perform on advanced placement (AP) course exams mirrors results from the ACT exam. Rural students perform less well than urban students.

Many explanations have been put forth to explain the rural versus urban achievement gap. Certainly, rural schools have fewer resources to draw on to prepare students. Rural schools typically offer fewer AP courses than suburban or urban schools. Rural schools also have less money to invest in laboratories and technology that would help rural students perform academically at a higher standard.

Narrowing the rural-urban achievement will be difficult. Illinois relies on local property taxes to fund its public school more than any other state. This results in Illinois having the most unequal school funding system in the United States (Kadner 2015). Consequently, rural areas with a sputtering economy, without a robust tax base will always be at a disadvantage unless financial resources can be reallocated from the state. As a proxy for the overall school funding gap hampering rural student success, a map of instructional costs per pupil shows that urban schools spend more on their students than rural schools do (Fig. 16).

Several remedies are being explored to resolve this challenge. First, the state and rural school districts are working together by using technology to help reduce the educational achievement gap. The Illinois Virtual School (IVS) offers a range of courses, including AP courses and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) courses online. They even offer an AP course in chemistry. The IVS ships a desk top laboratory to students so that they can run their own experiments. Of course, rural schools and students in rural areas can be hindered by the digital divide because rural counties have lower access to reliable, high quality broadband. However, the IVS represents solid progress on this front.

A second strategy is the increased use of community colleges and high schools collaborating to provide dual credit courses to high school students. Rural schools with limited course offerings can expand opportunities by allowing students to take community college courses for both high school and college credit. This also helps to demystify the college environment for rural high school student, who may become first generation college students.

The third strategy is to implement systemic reform in the way public education is funded in the state. There have been numerous blue-ribbon panels documenting the school funding inequality in Illinois (Ushomirsky and Williams 2015). Lawsuits have been filed against the state of Illinois to rectify the situation. But with a stagnant economy in Illinois, and the need to limit tax increases during the recent budget impasse, it is difficult to see how school funding reform will be implemented anytime soon. As this report is being written, the Governor and the state legislature are engaged in a contentious debate on SB1 to reallocate state resources to support underfunded schools.

An alternative strategy used in Texas is to redistribute more property tax revenues from the wealthiest school districts to the poorest ones (Smith 2011). But this would pit wealthy Chicago suburban school districts against poor, rural downstate districts, exacerbating an already bitter rural-urban rivalry. The upshot is that the burden for narrowing the educational achievement gap will fall on rural school districts and a revenue-starved Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE).

Boone Jo Daviess Stephenson Winnebago McHenry Carroll **Ogle** Kane DeKalb DuPage Whiteside Cook lee Kendall Rock Island Bureau Henry LaSalle Putnam Kankakee Stark Marshall Knox Livingston Warren Woodford Peoria Iroquois McDonough Tazewell McLean Hancock Mason Schuyler **De Witt** Champaign Logan Menard Platt Adams Brown Macon Sangamon Douglas Morgan Edgar Scott Pike Moultrie Christian Coles Shelby Calhoun Clark Macoupin Montgomery Cumberland Jersey Effingham Fayette Jasper Crawford **Bond** Madison **Percent of Adults** Righland Lawrence **Reporting Mental** Clinton **Health Not Good** St. Clair Wabash Wayne **Edwards** Washington 6% - 11% Jefferson Monroe 12% - 15% White Perry Hamilton 16% - 19% Franklin 20% - 25% **Gallatin** Saline Williamson No Data Available Hardin Union Pope Pulaski Massac

Illinois Department of Public Health; Illinois Public Health Community Map, downloaded July 3, 2017

Figure 11. Percentage of Adults Reporting Struggles with Mental Health Issues, 2010 to 2014

Boone Jo Daviess Stephenson Winnebago McHenry Lake **Carroll** Ogle Kane DeKalb DuPage Whiteside Cook Kendall Rock Island Will Bureau Henry LaSalle Grundy Mercer Putnam Kankakee Stark Marshall Knox Livingston Warren Woodford Iroquois endersor Ford McLean McDonough Tazewell Hancock Mason Schuyler De Witt Vermilion Champaign Logan Adams Menard Piatt Cass Brown Macon Sangamon Douglas Morgan Edgar Pike Moultrie Christian Coles Shelby Calhoun Macoupin Montgomery Cumberland Jersey Effingham Fayette Crawford Bond Madison **Percent Change in** Clay Lawrence Richland Opioid/Heroin Marion **Overdose Deaths** St. Clair Wabash Wayne Edwa Washington -100% - 19% Monroe Jefferson 20% - 135% White Hamilton Randolph Franklin 136% - 361% 362% - 941% Gallatin Jackson Saline Williamson No Data Available Hardin Union Johnson Pulaski Massa

Illinois Department of Public Health; Illinois Public Health Community Map, downloaded July 3, 2017

Figure 12. Percent Change in Opioid or Heroin Overdose Death by County from 2010 to 2015

Jo Daviess Stephenson Winnebago McHenry Lake Carroll Ogle Kane DeKalb DuPage Lee Cook Kendall Rock Island Will Henry Grundy Mercer Kankakee Marshall Knox Livingston Peoria Fulton McLean McDonough Tazewell Mason Schuyler **De Witt** Vermilion Champaign Logan Menard Adams **Platt Cass** Brown Macon Sangamon Douglas Morgan Edgar Scott Pike Moultrie Christian Coles Shelby Greene Calhoun Clark Macoupin Montgomery Cumberland **Jersey** Effingham **Fayette** Crawford Madison **Number of People** Clay Richland lawrence **One Primary Care** Clinton **Provider Serves** 33. Clair Wayne Edwa 746 - 1,346 Washington Jefferson 1,347 - 2,362 Hamfilton White Randolph Franklin 2,363 - 3,000 3,001 - 13,338 **Gallatin** Jackson Saline Williamson No Data Available Hardin Johnson Pope Pulaski Massac Illinois Department of Public Health; Illinois Public Health Community Map, downloaded July 3, 2017

Figure 13. Number of People Served by Each Primary Care Provider by County, 2012.

Jo Daviess Stephenson Winnebago McHenry Lake Carroll Ogle DeKalb DuPage Whiteside Kendall Will Rock Island Bureau La Salle Kankakee Stark Marshall Knox Warren Livingston Peoria Woodford McLean Tazewell McDonough Mason De Witt Champaign Logan Menard Adams Piatt Macon Douglas Edgar Pike Christian Coles Clark umberland Effingham Crawford Jasper Madison Richland Legend Marion St. Clair **Percent Food Insecure** Wayne Washington Jefferson 14.5% - 18.9% Perry 19% - 22.4% White Franklin 22.5% - 28.5% Jackson Williamson 28.6% - 36.8% Source: Map the Meal Gap, available at http://www.feedingamerica.org.

Figure 14. Percent of Children with Food Insecurity in Illinois, 2016

Jo Daviess Lake Winnebago DeKalb Whiteside Rock Island La Salle Kankakee Marshall Knox Warren Livingston Ford Fulton McLean McDonough Tazewell Hancock Schuyle De Witt Champaign Menard Adams Sangamon Edgar Pike Coles Shelby Montgomery Fayette Jasper Bond Richland Marion Clinton Wayne Washington Perry White Randolph Franklin Legend Gallatin Jackson **ACT Comprehensive Scores** Saline Williamson 14.8 - 18.8 Union Johnson 18.9 - 20.7 20.8 - 22.9 23.0 - 27.4

Figure 15. ACT Comprehensive Scores by Unit and High School District, 2013-2014 School Year

Source: ISBE Report Card Results (2014)

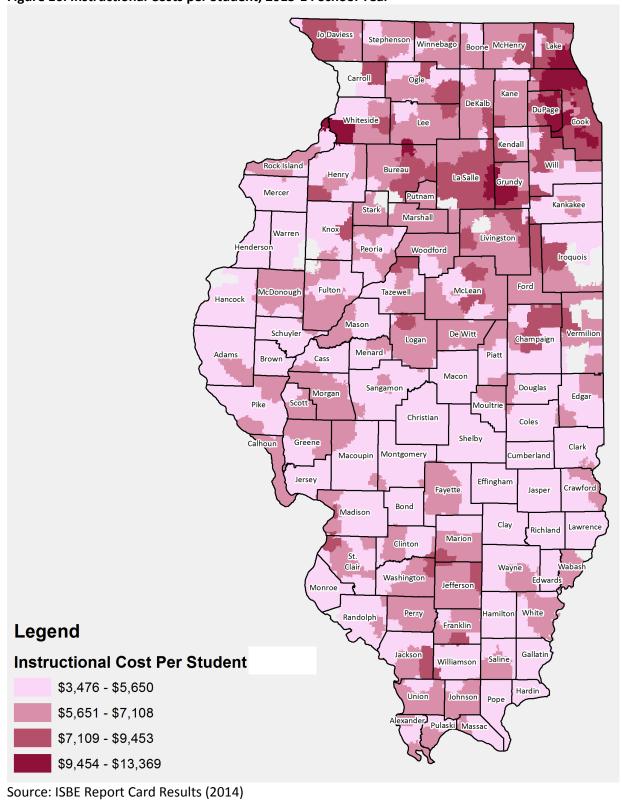


Figure 16. Instructional Costs per Student, 2013-14 School Year

PART III. GRAC WORKING GROUP ACTIVITIES

Several trends mentioned in the previous section have transformed the rural Midwest and rural Illinois over the past five decades. Under the leadership of Lt. Governor Sanguinetti, the GRAC formed four working groups to address four rural development themes that have been described in depth above. These groups include:

- 1. Economic Development Working Group;
- 2. Workforce Development Working Group;
- 3. Health Working Group; and
- **4.** Education Working Group.

Economic Development Working Group Report

The Economic Development Working Group is focused on understanding the unique needs in rural areas and adapting existing programs and services to meet needs. The only clear conclusion is that solutions must be multi-faceted and adaptable to the varied conditions across rural Illinois.

Rural Illinois residents embrace traditions of service to their local communities through service organizations, including churches and schools. Rural Illinois has a reliable workforce over the age of 50 and low crime. Data shows an aging rural population, lower incomes, older housing stock, lower education levels and aging infrastructure are other characteristics that influence workforce quality. Most rural areas rely on property taxes as the primary public revenue source followed by sales tax, which correlates with population or traffic from interstate highways, then income tax. Property tax bills reflect public schools and community colleges as the primary beneficiaries followed by municipalities, counties, townships, and then special districts such as libraries, fire and emergency services.

Rural Illinois relies significantly on microenterprises that employ 5 or fewer employees. Association for Enterprise Opportunity (AEO) data shows that one fifth of the employment in rural Illinois counties comes from microenterprises (AEO 2011). As a state, Illinois has ranked high compared to neighboring states and in the country on the Innovation Index published by the Purdue Center for Regional Development (2006). The index factors in Human Capital, Economic Dynamics, Productivity and Employment and Economic Well-Being.

Many elected officials in rural areas are volunteers. There are limited funds available to hire professionals trained in public administration. Often, the volunteer leaders are either retired or self-employed. Although the volunteers may be trained in their professional area of expertise, willing to pursue opportunities and motivated to improve their communities, they are limited by their awareness of available programs and their communities' preparedness as well as their personal abilities to complete grant applications. The other limitation inherent in elected leadership is there is frequent turnover among councils and boards.

Given these circumstances, it is necessary for the State of Illinois to structure its program and service delivery in a segmented approach to meet the intended market's needs. Rural program delivery requires a personal approach rather than relying solely on web-based menus and options that are very effective for those communities and businesses that have full-time staff dedicated to seeking resources that would benefit their goals. The suggestions below offer ways that the delivery of economic development programming could be improved in rural Illinois.

- 1. Business Support and Program Delivery.
 - a. A portal for businesses to receive answers and or assistance to their questions. The Economic Development Working Group recommends an easy to use website to navigate all of the potential incentive and tax credit programs alongside the existing staff resources to help communities and businesses find and apply for the best programs for their unique situation.
 - b. Creating Opportunities for Retention and Expansion (CORE) business visitation program. Department of Commerce Regional Economic Development Teams have launched a pilot program called the Creating Opportunities for Retention and Expansion (CORE) business visitation program. The program relies on collaboration between state representatives, regional and local economic development representatives as well as utility providers who are providing a subscription-based database to produce industry analysis reports and to facilitate business retention and expansion efforts. In addition to working with existing economic development organizations, it would be helpful if RED team members could schedule visits with businesses in rural areas where no local economic development organization exists. The RED Team would be responsible for leading follow up measures stemming from the retention visit.
 - c. Develop models or procedures that can be replicated or adapted for the purposes of 1) business succession planning and 2) facilitating startup of new businesses. Given the importance of small businesses to rural places, and given that the average age of owner-operators is 55, there is an imperative to grow a new crop of entrepreneurs and business owners who are equipped to run existing, profitable businesses. This entails legal and accounting advice as well as the skills, knowledge and character to be self-employed and a manager. Existing programs such as Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities (CEO), a program of the Midland Institute for Entrepreneurship, play a valuable role in exposing high school seniors to the range of businesses and opportunities in rural areas. The program also helps them establish a support network. Business leaders working with their local schools have established CEO programs in 30 Illinois counties most are rural. It is one piece of many in what could become an intentional process to help existing profitable businesses transfer between generations.
 - d. Promote Rural Reverse Funding Fairs throughout the state. This collaborative approach has been led in partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development, the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs and state agencies. The agencies notify communities in a region that they will be available as a group on a given day and invite the communities to prepare a presentation on the project(s) that are local priorities. Then the agencies provide input onto what programs and technical expertise might apply to the effort. Because of the follow up required to assist communities, one funding fair each quarter is the goal set by the participating program managers.

2. Infrastructure and Planning.

a. Explore ways to commercialize existing fiber-optic resources owned by the State of Illinois. The GRAC Economic Development Working Group applauds current policies that provide leasing of fiber and access to POPs on the Illinois Century Network. The State is encouraged to leverage state and local resources with federal programs to further build out and serve rural communities business and residential areas.

- b. The state should play a role in supporting and incentivizing local communities to plan for their futures. The plans should be based on pillars of development referenced in the Competitive Communities Initiative process used by the Department of Commerce at the turn of the century. RED team members could be frontline liaisons to introduce the planning process to community leaders and to provide them with support and samples to initiate the process.
- c. Develop a strategy for rural economic development in Illinois. The GRAC is a repository of information and people from most state agencies and the private sector who each have rural programs and expertise that would be a willing partner in DCEO efforts to develop a strategy for rural economic development. An effective strategy will consider:
 - i. Analyzing existing state of Illinois and local government policies to identify opportunities to remove economic developmental hurdles such as high and unfair taxation, regulatory challenges, and zoning burdens.
 - **ii.** Addressing the demographic decline of rural areas and developing a plan to attract people between 25-40 years old to into rural areas.
 - **iii.** Address the need to redevelop rural communities by proposing policy solutions to free up resources for redevelopment and reduce counterproductive regulations hindering redevelopment of rural downtowns.
 - iv. Address the job skills gap in rural areas and develop policies to enhance vocational (career and technical) training programs to build skills in trades, and computer technologies coupled with business and entrepreneurial education to enable people to be self-employed or managers.
 - **v.** Compare state and local government policies to other states in our region. Adopt best practices from states with the fastest growing rural areas.
- d. DCEO and the GRAC should review and implement relevant recommendations from previous bodies of work that have considered rural economic health:
 - i. Vision for Illinois Agriculture collaborative effort of Illinois farm organizations, universities, agribusiness, bio-life innovators, and food processing.
 - **ii.** FARM Illinois "A partnership for competitiveness and sustainable growth in food, agriculture and agribusiness." collaborative effort between City of Chicago, Illinois farm organizations and private foundations.
 - iii. Past GRAC reports and strategies.
 - **iv.** Archived information from Governor Ryan's Agriculture Assembly also contained many recommendations to improve the economic and social conditions of rural Illinois.
 - v. Northern Illinois University Center for Governmental Studies.
 - vi. Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs.
 - vii. University of Illinois Extension Community and Economic Development team.

3. Policy.

- **a.** The Lt. Governor's office proposed policies that could help the rural economy:
 - i. A bill to reduce filing costs for Limited Liability Companies (LLCs).
 - ii. An angel investment bill to benefit minorities and women.
 - iii. Discussion of Economic Empowerment Zones that would reduce the overall tax burden by providing tax credits for businesses and potentially reducing the state's share of sales and income tax. Zones would be determined based on poverty and unemployment levels.

- **b.** Suggested policy changes made by the Economic Development Working group include:
 - i. Rework the motor fuel tax formula to funnel more funds to local governments.
 - ii. Increasing the number of enterprise zones in Illinois so that the rural areas that have traditionally had enterprise zones will be able to apply (current structure has placed numeric quotas and has approved many new zones in urban areas in the first few rounds while not allowing existing zones to "apply early").
 - **iii.** Create tax credits for individual and business giving to community foundations that are in place to enhance the social and economic well-being of rural areas.
 - **iv.** Modify payback periods, matching ratios and interest rates on funding for water, transportation and other critical infrastructure to rural communities

Workforce Development Working Group

Access to a qualified work force is crucial for economic development and is being raised as an issue by employers as a deterrent to their expansion plans. Compounding this issue is that population forecasts for the next 15 to 20 years project declines in rural areas and substantial growth in people over 65 years of age that will shrink the work force. This situation calls for special efforts, statewide, to attract and retain young adults. The passage of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act in 2014 brought attention to work force needs and brought new opportunities for improved local planning. The WIOA (Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act) generated new programs to work with employers to better link residents to job opportunities through education and talent pipelines across the state.

The GRAC created a working subgroup on Rural Work Force Development to identify specific issues that might not currently be addressed and find innovative practices that might be brought to Illinois. After discussing work force issues with employer groups such as the Illinois Manufacturers Association, the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (WIB), and WIB directors in rural areas, the working group identified several issues of special importance to rural areas. Several key jobs including welders, truck drivers, CNC (computer numeric controlled) machinists, health care technicians and, in some regions, teachers are in especially short supply. Basing policies on data specific to rural would generate more workable solutions. For instance, restrictions on commercial drivers' licenses, in some areas, make it difficult to transport agricultural crops across state lines.

More systematic approaches to training will help rural areas with small numbers of students and a need for expertise on multiple skills will benefit rural workers who perform multiple tasks on their jobs. In these cases, however, agencies providing training must have the equipment and other resources to provide training for multiple jobs. Some cannot afford the costs associated with this training. Thus, small classes with few participants are not provided. Residents in rural areas also suffer from limited access to public transportation. In these cases, rural residents may have access to neither employment opportunities nor the training needed to hold those jobs.

Major work by the Illinois Advanced Apprenticeship Program spearheaded by the Illinois Manufacturers Association and others is underway to provide high quality apprenticeships for rural youth. These efforts, however, may be hampered in sparsely populated areas with few employers to provide solid apprenticeship experiences for local youth and some of these programs require hands-on experiences. Clearly these programs can benefit rural youth in areas with sufficient employers and/or transportation services available so that youth can access them.

Also of significant concern are declining labor force participation rates which were 57.5% in rural compared with 60.5% in metro counties. Aging of the population is one explanation with a larger share of the population interested in working part-time or on a flexible schedule. These residents often are experienced and have the technical skills needed by businesses. However, in some cases, they may need additional training. Programs such as *FactoryFix* use a web-based system to match employees having skill sets and experience and interested in short-term employment with employment opportunities in the region. Expanding this type of approach could provide employers with ways to connect with experienced workers nearing or past retirement age and arrange for short-term work assignments.

Efforts to build a stronger talent pipeline through career awareness are needed with several efforts underway. National Manufacturing Day is held in October and Illinois has designed October as manufacturing month. Many high schools, community colleges and manufacturing companies participate in exposing students to advanced manufacturing and host robotics competitions to encourage student interest. These and other efforts are needed, especially in rural areas. Equally important, though, are programs that help retain people who been trained in rural areas. To this end, it is important to provide training that matches the jobs available locally.

A combination of population declines, declining labor force participation, and a growing need for highly trained workers poses serious issues for rural employers. Attracting young adults and retaining workers approaching retirement age in the work force will be even more important in the future and state policies should be evaluated regarding ways in which they can help build a rural work force with the needed skills. Rural work force issues differ from those in metro areas so the solutions must address local needs.

Health Working Group

The Health Working Group is a diverse committee from various sectors. It includes members of the public, university health service administrators, and representatives from State of Illinois agencies. It has been focused on identifying challenges that are especially pressing in the rural sections of Illinois.

One of the continuing goals is to explore best practices regarding the use of alternative health delivery models. Of particular interest is the status of telemedicine. Southern Illinois University (SIU) is a significant leader as the SIU School of Medicine has taken a major role in providing health care from a remote site to some of the underserved parts of rural Illinois. As of January 2017, it has 15 clinical sites in operation. For example, sites are based in Anna, Carlinville, Dixon, Dwight, Havana, and Murphysboro. SIU School of Medicine is also providing education in 49 sites via its telehealth program. The success and expansion of this effort is to be commended.

The Office of the Lt. Governor is also working on two health-related developments. First, the Lt. Governor is working to reconstitute the Interagency Coordinating Council for Transportation (ICCT). Many rural residents don't have dependable transportation for attending medical appointments, going to work, or even visiting friends and family. Lacking transportation can diminish physical health as well as overall quality of life. The ICCT was created to bring multiple state agencies together including IDOT, Illinois Department on Aging, Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS), and the IIRA, to help identify barriers to public transit services in rural areas. The ICCT has not met since 2009. Reconvening this council help improve demand-response public transit services in downstate Illinois.

A second issue is working to respond to the opioid crisis described in the early sections of this report. This office is working with state legislators to pass legislation that would limit the length of time for opioid prescriptions to seven days. The goal is to reduce the supply of opioid prescriptions so that patients will be less likely to become addicted.

The Office of the Lt. Governor has also worked with the IDPH to disseminate better knowledge about the opioid problems in rural Illinois, and its impact on public health. Across the state, the death toll from opioid overdoses has increased exponentially. According to 2016 provisional data from IDPH (as of June 1, 2017), there were 1,888 recorded opioid-related overdose fatalities – more than one and a half times the number of homicides and nearly twice the number of fatal motor vehicle accidents. Since 2013, the number of heroin deaths in Illinois has nearly doubled and the number of prescription opioid deaths has almost quadrupled.

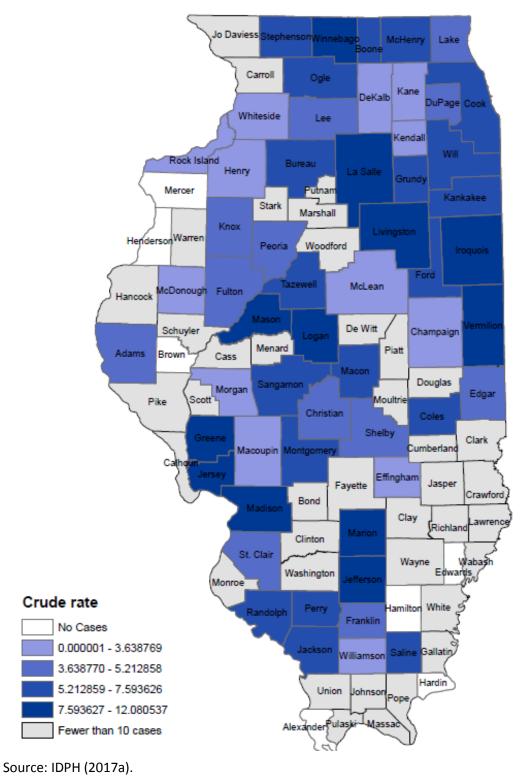
The increase in overdose deaths is likely being driven in large part by an increase in deaths from synthetic opioids such as fentanyl. Illinois ranked as the third highest state in percentage increase in death rates involving synthetic opioids in 2014-2015, and per IDPH (2017a) Vital Records Death Data, one third of overdoses in 2016 involved a synthetic opioid.

Rural areas of Illinois have been severely impacted by opioid epidemic. Just over the past two years (2014-2016), the rate of opioid overdose deaths as well as hospital discharges for opioid overdose has increased by 30% in rural counties. In 2015-2016, rural counties in Illinois experienced an average of 10.3 opioid overdose fatalities and 71 non-fatal opioid overdoses per 100,000 population per year. Figure 17 maps out the concentration of higher opioid overdose rates in many rural Illinois counties.

Rural counties in Illinois have also been disproportionately impacted by Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS), which occurs when a newborn exposed prenatally to opioids experiences withdrawal upon birth, and which can lead to irritability, tremors, feeding problems, vomiting, diarrhea, sweating, and in some cases, seizures. Reflective of increasing maternal opioid use, the rate of NAS in rural Illinois counties has increased by 200% over the past five years, as compared to an increase of 36% in urban counties (IDPH Adverse Pregnancy Outcomes Reporting System Data 2017b).

Exacerbating the problem is the fact that emergency medical services coverage is sparser in rural counties than in urban counties. Analysis of IDPH EMS (Emergency Medical Services) data shows that the number of ambulances per square mile in rural counties is only 37% that of urban counties (0.03 vs. 0.09), and the average EMS response time to a drug overdose call is over 40% longer in rural counties than in urban counties.

Figure 17. Crude Rate of Emergency Department Visits for Opioid and Heroin Overdoses (per 10,000 people) in Illinois, 2016



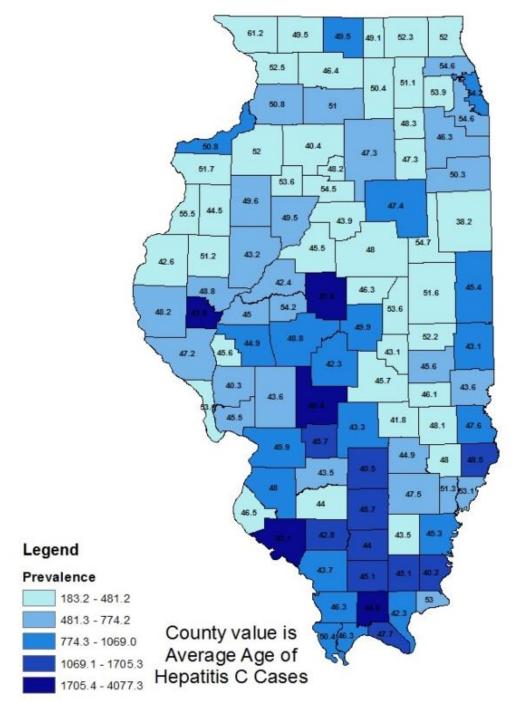
The public health consequences of opioid and heroin addiction can be seen in the outbreaks of hepatitis C in the southern and rural parts of Illinois (Fig. 18). Outbreaks of hepatitis C virus (HCV) are a strong indicator of injection drug use, including injection opioid use, and analysis of IDPH data indicates that HCV is a serious problem in rural Illinois.

The state of Illinois has been actively addressing the opioid epidemic through legislation and various state agency level initiatives since 2010, including the following:

- During the 2016 State of the State address, Governor Rauner announced a Health and Human Services Transformation that focuses on behavioral health (mental health and substance use), specifically the integration of behavioral and physical health service delivery. Transformation efforts emphasize:
 - 1) Prevention and public health;
 - 2) Making evidence-based decisions; and
 - **3)** Moving individuals from institutions to community care to keep them more closely connected with their families and communities.
- The Medicaid 1115 Demonstration Waiver proposes to enhance Illinois' current system of care that will build on transformation efforts, creating a truly integrated physical and behavioral health system that is centered on individuals with behavioral health disorders, their families, and their communities. Proposed pilot projects to improve care available to people with opioid use disorder (OUD) include: a medication-assisted treatment (MAT) program for individuals prior to their release from the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC); restructuring intake, pre-discharge and discharge processes in Illinois correctional facilities to ensure that eligible individuals are enrolled in Medicaid upon release, facilitating linkages to care; and a recovery coaching pilot for individuals with an OUD who have begun the recovery process.
- The Good Samaritan Law (PA-096-0361) makes it legal in Illinois for non-medical persons to
 administer the overdose reversal medication naloxone to another individual to prevent a fatal
 opioid overdose. It also ensures that individuals seeking emergency medical assistance for an
 overdose are not charged or prosecuted for felony possession (within specific limitations).
- The Heroin Crisis Act (PA-99-0480) supports education and training initiatives for law
 enforcement, schools, emergency responders, and others regarding naloxone; strengthens the
 Illinois Prescription Monitoring Program (ILPMP); and provides greater access to all U.S. Food
 and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved medication-assisted treatment (MAT) for Medicaideligible patients in Illinois.
- Federal dollars awarded to the IDHS/Division of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (IDHS/DASA) for Illinois' State Targeted Response to the Opioid Crisis Grant (Opioid STR) have been earmarked to fund prevention, treatment, and recovery programs across the state.

Recognizing the severity of the opioid crisis facing Illinois, a coalition of state agencies began meeting in early 2017 to develop a statewide approach to the epidemic. This coalition has been working on a comprehensive and coordinated state strategy to address the opioid epidemic, which is expected to be released in the upcoming months.

Figure 18. Hepatitis C Prevalence Rate by County, 2006-16, with Average Age of Recent Cases, 2014-16



Source: IDPH (2017b).

Education Working Group

The data from the first part of this report highlight the gaps between rural and urban counties on a range of issues including educational attainment, which contributes to the documented gaps in income, unemployment, poverty, and even health outcomes. Given the inability of the state to resolve the school funding inequity problem, it falls to rural communities to find their own solutions.

The first promising solution is the CEO program, also identified by the economic development working group. The Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities (CEO) program is an excellent way to incorporate entrepreneurship and small business development into the high school curriculum. By incorporating the CEO program and entrepreneurship training in rural high schools, it will broaden the high school educational experience, while enriching community sustainability because young people might be more willing and able to start small businesses in rural places. The IIRA has invited the CEO program to give presentations in Carthage, Quincy, Moline, and Macomb. Carthage started a CEO program in 2016. Macomb is in the early stages of starting a CEO program, too.

An important cross-sectoral angle on the CEO program is to explore how young farmers can be inspired to start Ag-related business, which can augment farm operations. Luke Allen invited CEO representative Cheryl Mitchell to have her speak to Ag students about entrepreneurial opportunities. This

One of the challenges identified by the workforce group is retirement and looming skilled worker shortages. There will also be a retirement of many small business owners in rural places. The CEO program and similar training programs might help rural places keep these businesses open by encouraging a new generation of entrepreneurs that can take over existing businesses, not just start new businesses. In order to expand on the idea of entrepreneurship and business succession, the IIRA is hosting public, educational workshops on business succession planning in Stockton, Carthage, and Moline in 2017.

A second small but important strategy that could help rural schools is to streamline and reduce costs associated with student teacher background checks. Each student teacher is required to pay for a background check before they can begin their required classroom training experiences. The challenge for these fledgling teachers is that each county requires a separate background check, which costs students extra money. This can result in a new student having to pay hundreds of dollars over and above existing college tuition, books, and other expenses. One suggestion is to have a single background check that is recognized across multiple counties and jurisdictions. This would save time and money for student teachers and reduce bureaucracy.

A third strategy is to reduce the rural versus urban disparity in access to diverse courses. As noted above, students in urban communities can take advanced placement (AP) courses and dual credit courses that are often not available to rural students. Many rural areas can't offer these classes because of low teacher salaries, school funding inequality between rural and urban places, and the lack of broadband, among a range of challenges. But solutions are being found. For example, Illinois will be the first state to offer online Ag classes. This could help expand Ag education across Illinois. It was also noted that it only take five students to start an FFA (Future Farmers of America) chapter. These are two initiatives that might help expand Ag education and an appreciation of agriculture across Illinois.

The office of the Lt. Governor is also taking a lead role in working to reduce the rural-urban educational achievement gap. A first step was to convene a panel of experts to educate GRAC member about the rural-urban educational opportunity gap, and then to discuss options to expanding the options available to rural students. This panel included a representative from the College Board, which administers the AP exams in Illinois, the Illinois Virtual School (IVS), and a school administrator with experience working with community colleges to help high school students earn dual credit.

Summary of Working Group Activities

The four working group summaries reveal that there is agreement among GRAC members on a rural development agenda. Rural communities are lagging behind urban regions on a range of measures. But the solutions require a holistic approach that includes policies that address providing more equitable access to health care and education, while providing a better workforce and a more competitive environment for rural businesses.

Local Government Modernization Issues

Introduction. Illinois has long had the reputation for the largest number of local governments of any other state contributing to the highest, or second highest, effective property taxes and duplication of services in many areas. Several factors, not the least of which are restrictive limits on local debt and property tax rates, prompted local officials to create additional governments when tax rate and debt limits were reached. The patchwork quilt pattern of local governments confuses taxpayers about which governmental units are responsible for providing services to a specific location and can increase costs which places Illinois at a disadvantage in competing for business investment.

In addition, unfunded state mandates regarding policies and procedures for local service delivery can become outdated with technology changes and unnecessarily increase the costs of local services. Local governments have become more professionally managed and advances in technology now permit the delivery of higher quality services at lower costs.

In 2015, Governor Bruce Rauner created a statewide bipartisan Task Force on Government Consolidation and Unfunded Mandates, chaired by Lt. Governor Evelyn P. Sanguinetti, to examine the need for modernization of governmental structure in Illinois. The Task Force solicited input for government agencies and then made 27 recommendations to the General Assembly for legislative action. An underlying principle of the Task Force was to enable local residents and public officials to change the structure of local governments in their areas when costs can be reduced. Many of these options in the past required legislative approval by the General Assembly.

In the first year of a planned three-year modernization effort, the Task Force obtained input from nearly 500 local officials and evaluated ways to expand local authority to address duplications of governments and identify burdensome unfunded state mandates. The Task Force completed its work and filed its report with recommendations in December 2015.

The second phase of the modernization effort involved proposing and submitting legislation to the Illinois General Assembly to increase options available to residents and public officials to streamline local government institutions and agencies in their areas. Key pieces of the proposed legislation passed the General Assembly and are currently awaiting the Governor's signature. The legislation empowers groups of residents and units of local government to hold a referendum on various consolidation and

service sharing arrangements that formerly were available only by petitioning the General Assembly on a case-by-case basis. Examples of success in these efforts are already underway in both metro and rural Illinois.

The third phase involves working with professional and research units such as the NIU Center for Governmental Studies to generate and provide materials for local leaders to use in identifying the potential for cost-savings and ways to evaluate opportunities for streamlining local service delivery. The effects of this recently started project will be seen over the next several months as the materials are developed in conjunction with local public officials and residents.

Importance for Rural Areas. While much discussion about streamlining governmental structure involved densely-settled metropolitan areas where governments in formerly rural areas are no longer needed because the services are absorbed by higher governments. However, less densely populated rural areas often face a different type of situation. These areas have a long history of population declines and the current governmental structure, designed for a larger population base, is no longer affordable to deliver cost-effective and high quality services.

It is not uncommon, for instance, for rural counties in Illinois with populations less than 15,000 to have as many as 30 or more units of local government, many of which are independent school districts. Many small governments, in some instances, mean a disproportionate share of expenditures are for administrative functions that could be reduced with larger units.

Fewer residents and shrinking tax bases mean that alternative service delivery systems and cost-sharing arrangements are needed and are underway. Small communities sometimes contract with the county sheriff's office for limited police protection or collaborate with other small towns to form a special district to provide fire protection and emergency services. Other cost-sharing arrangements can be documented but, in some instances, these improvements were hard to implement because of statutory limitations.

The best-suited arrangements for cost-effective delivery of public services are unique to specific locations especially in rural areas. The key issue is that residents and local leaders have the powers to evaluate the situation and design a cost-effective system given the tax base and financial position in their area. The outcome of the Task Force has been to expand these alternatives and help local leaders find more cost-effective arrangements for delivering high quality public services. New and innovative service delivery arrangements are continually being researched and will be proposed by the GRAC as they become available.

PART IV. GOVERNOR'S RURAL AFFAIRS COUNCIL MEMBER ACTIVITIES

Introduction

The GRAC is made up of 18 institutional, 2 *ex officio*, and 6 citizen members. The full roster of the GRAC is provided on page ii of this report. The 18 institutional and two *ex officio* members either have broad regional or statewide missions, whether they are state or federal agencies, nonprofit organizations, or institutions of higher education. That means that they all deliver services and complete projects in rural Illinois. This part of the GRAC report documents recent efforts by 17 GRAC institutional and 2 *ex officio* member organizations to deliver services in rural Illinois.

1. ILLINOIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARD (ICCB)

Of the 48 Illinois community colleges, 18 (37.5 %) of them are considered "rural." Several Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) initiatives, the ICCB Workforce Education Strategic plan, and two enhancement grants, provide opportunities for Illinois' rural community college students and communities.

a. Workforce Education and Strategic Plan (WESP)

The ICCB has created (with many partners and the Illinois Community College System) a 5-year strategic plan designed to ensure that the Illinois community college system:

- Remains a leader in the complementary fields of workforce training and education;
- Becomes even more responsive to changing employer and student needs throughout the state;
- Strengthens business and industry relationships;
- Provides integrated options for students to move quickly into career pathways; and
- Maximizes employer engagement in the development of relevant programs that will lead to jobs and careers that offer family-sustaining wages.

How does WESP benefit rural communities?

- Provides early career-related education and exposure that can help rural teachers and other
 educational stakeholders to engage students at an earlier age to provide career information and
 early education intervention;
- Addresses essential and occupational skills gaps for rural students to develop the non-technical skills employers want;
- Aligns education and training to meet employer needs, more critical in rural areas where there may be fewer employers; and
- Strengthens connections among public partners and communities to engage and align with business to create stronger partnerships and more rural employment opportunities.

b. Dual Credit Enhancement Grant

Through this grant, Illinois community colleges are able to plan and implement new dual credit offerings in existing locations based upon student needs and with local partnerships. Colleges received \$19,500 each and were funded through Federal Perkins Leadership / Career and Technical Education (CTE) dollars. At least 60 new dual credit offerings will be available with over 70 local school district partners.

How does this grant opportunity benefit rural communities?

- Creates a pipeline for rural high school students to gain college credit;
- Offers higher education affordability to rural high school students; and
- Enables rural high schools to offer courses they may not be able to offer on their own.

Kaskaskia College will pilot a new dual credit course, GUID 110 Career Education Planning, in two high schools starting in fall, 2017 for juniors and seniors who are undecided about whether they want to attend college or enter the workforce directly out of high school.

Kishwaukee College will offer dual credit courses at several high schools, focusing on horticulture, agriculture, diesel power, welding, and office systems.

Lincoln Trail College has re-designed the curriculum for a construction technology dual credit course and has implemented it with Palestine and Robinson High Schools. They are planning an upcoming workshop with other area high schools.

Southeastern Illinois College will partner with district high schools to serve as a resource to enhance students' college and career readiness aptitude as well as assist with their transition to postsecondary education. Business 134 (Personal Finance) was articulated with Pope County High School.

c. Career Pathways Enhancement Grant

This grant supports the development and enhancement of career pathways. Colleges received \$5,000 each and were funded through Federal Perkins Leadership (CTE) dollars. Career pathways are being identified and developed in at least 15 different program areas.

How does this grant opportunity benefit rural communities?

- Provides career exposure that rural students may not have access to;
- Provides students the option to make more informed career pathway choices; and
- Develops accelerated models for students to complete more quickly with less cost.

Lake Land College (LLC) – Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources. LLC plans to meet with the CORPs partners to discuss, develop, and implement teaching and learning activities that assist students with higher level understanding of STEM principles, the development of higher-level critical thinking skills, problem solving skills, and work ethics. LLC will work to design, develop, and implement new and existing curricula in both the AFNR and STEM pathways for students engaged in teaching and learning opportunities within the CORPs project.

McHenry County College – <u>Business and Marketing</u>. MCC will collaborate with the district high schools to share and analyze student data from high school through higher education in order to inform decisions that will lead to program improvements that strengthen career pathways and partnerships, general education pathways, and lead to improved student success in career pathways.

Olney Central College – <u>Manufacturing, Healthcare, Transportation, IT</u>. The focus of this grant project will be to develop an apprenticeship curriculum model that is adaptable across multiple CTE programs and career pathways.

2. ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (IDOA)

The Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA) is a proud member of the GRAC. Many communities in rural Illinois depend on agriculture as a source of income and economic growth. The Department of Agriculture promotes, regulates and protects the state's agricultural industry while providing a wide range of consumer services. The Department ensures that quality agricultural products and services are labeled accurately and sold fairly. The Department sponsors numerous promotional events; generates marketing information for agribusinesses; checks scales, gasoline pumps and greenhouses; regulates the use of pesticides; manages livestock waste; implements soil and water conservation programs; and regulates the grain, feed, seed and fertilizer industries.

The Department plays a key role in the protection of our food supply. Through the Division of Food Safety and Animal Protection, the Department licenses and inspects all establishments in which animals or poultry are slaughtered or processed for intrastate sale. Through the Bureau of Ag Product Inspections, the Department tests samples of wheat and corn from harvests to ensure our state's crops are free of mycotoxins, a mold that can potentially be harmful to animals and humans.

The Department of Agriculture is also tasked with promoting agriculture through our state and county fairs. In Illinois, county fairs are a historical tradition dating back to the 1840s. These fairs are an important source of revenue for our rural economies. In addition, the youth exhibitors at our state and county fairs are our state's next farmers, ranchers, producers, agribusiness CEOs, and small business owners. The lessons learned, and connections made, at our state and county fairs help to build character and a strong a work ethic that will power our workforce for generations to come.

Illinois farmers, ranchers, and producers have a great responsibility to feed and clothe the world. In order to do this, we must be good stewards of the land. The Department of Agriculture works to limit the irreversible conversion of rich Illinois farmland, and provide technical assistance to local government in developing programs for farmland protection. One of activities of the Department includes reviewing coal-mining permit applications for reclamation techniques to ensure that mined agricultural land is returned to its original productivity. The Department also operates a statewide agricultural pesticide container recycling program and conducts unwanted pesticide collection and disposal activities to protect water quality through the Bureau of Environmental Programs.

3. ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY (DCEO)

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) provides many programs to support economic and workforce development across the state to improve the quality of life for Illinoisans. Assistance to Illinoisans, including those in rural areas, comes from several offices, including:

DCEO's Office of Entrepreneurship, Innovation & Technology (EIT) runs twenty-seven Small Business and Development Centers located across the state, many in small rural towns that help citizens with any issues pertaining to small business. These centers are focused on cultivating the ideas and potential of Illinoisans who are looking to scale up into businesses. In addition, EIT is collaborating in various agricultural and farming initiatives including Farm Illinois and the University of Illinois' College of Agriculture (ACES) to bring modernization and new technologies to rural farming areas.

Our Workforce Office is undertaking new programs to increase assistance to areas who are seeing high unemployment rates or underemployment by emphasizing apprenticeships and connecting workers to

new skill training. In addition, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is a federally funded program designed to provide individuals who have been laid off or whose household income is at or below the federal poverty level with employment and training services. It's designed to benefit job seekers, laid-off workers, older youth, incumbent workers, new entrants to the workforce, veterans, persons with disabilities and employers. Illinois WorkNet Centers serve as the point of entry for delivery of services. There are success stories across the state, both individual and programmatic. One exceptional initiative was the No Job Left Behind initiative in Moultrie County, which was honored with the Innovative Solutions statewide award. The Initiative pulls together businesses, community colleges, schools and community members to build the skilled workforce throughout the Central Illinois area. Among its efforts, a Manufacturing Week was set up for students to tour area plants, and other businesses have been involved. Classes are taught like students are at a job, clocking in and out to account for their time, and soft skills such as showing up on time, dressing appropriately and being drug free, are learned. Thirteen high schools and 260 students participated.

The Office of Community Development administers federal Community Development Block Grant funds for communities outside of entitlement areas that receive their own allocation from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Grants are available for public infrastructure, housing rehabilitation, and economic development. In 2016, forty communities received funding to update aging infrastructure with \$15.3 million in grant funding, particularly in low-to-moderate income (LMI) areas. Nineteen communities shared more than \$7 million to bring substandard LMI homes up to code.

The Office of Energy Assistance administers grants for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and the Illinois Home Weatherization Assistance Program (IHWAP). Both of these programs have a prominent presence in rural Illinois. The sub grantees who administer the programs provide services with a focus on client outreach and education. Energy-saving tips are given to clients, as well as physical cost-saving measures that are performed on qualifying homes. LIHEAP clients are also instructed in the area of financial literacy, which includes regular bill-paying and how to budget household income.

4. ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT SECURITY (IDES)

The Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) encourages economic growth and stability in Illinois by providing Employment Services to Illinois residents and employers. In addition to administering the Unemployment Insurance programs, a major component of the services offered include the collection and dissemination of Illinois' essential Labor Market Information (LMI).

The LMI captures wage records submitted by Illinois employers. LMI data include the industry occupation, short and long term projections, occupational wages, and employee demographic characteristics in their respective regions. The LMI prepared by IDES allows research institutions, regional planning commissions, business leaders, as well as community and economic development leaders to fully understand the nature of their workforce. This type of data monitoring and forecasting provides a better understanding of the employment characteristics and growth trends at the regional level assisting leaders in the development of public policy.

LMI also provides Illinoisans an opportunity to make informed educational and professional development decisions. The IDES services also help to protect against waste, fraud and abuse by ensuring the integrity of the wage reports and unemployment claims.

In an effort to connect employers with qualified employees, IDES currently provides services in 36 One-Stop and affiliate offices strategically placed throughout the state. Staff can assist job seekers with work readiness, job search assistance and referrals to partner and community services. Job Readiness Workshops are conducted regularly along with one-on-one job search assistance. Computers are made available at the local offices for job seeker use. Many of these locations provide space for employers to hold hiring events and interviews.

The Agency also provides many online services that allow job seekers access to many of the same services and information that are available in the local offices.

One of the newest services is the Reality Check app, which offers step-by-step instructions on how to evaluate a career, obtain the education and training needed for that career through a series of questions such as, "Where do you want to live?" and "What will you use for transportation?" Then it summarizes the monthly cost of these choices and generates a list of occupations in one of 13 Illinois cities which offer a complete cross-section of possible options. Each city has a different cost of living, which will be factored into the final analysis.

Other online services include but are not limited to: the State sponsored Labor Exchange System (IllinoisJobLink.com); multi-lingual YouTube tutorials; Virtual Labor Market Information; Illinois Career Information System and IllinoisWorknet.com. To further assist employers and job seekers, IDES provides two call centers with staff available to answer questions about employment services and Unemployment Insurance benefits.

IDES is shifting its focus from *unemployment to employment* and will serve as the preeminent employment agency to ensure quality service to job seekers, claimants as well as employers. In an effort to make the services more widely available, the Agency is developing a series of job readiness workshop videos which job seekers will be able to access from the growing suite of online services. Job seekers that register with the state sponsored labor exchange, IllinoisJobLink.com, will have the opportunity to complete an employment assessment in an attempt to identify areas in which employment assistance is needed. The assessment will recommend appropriate online workshops to job seekers or direct the job seeker to attend a reemployment workshop in person at a facility of his/her choosing. The assessment tool will allow IDES staff to be alerted of job seekers that may need more intensive services.

As of July 17, 2016 all job seekers who file for Unemployment Insurance benefits will be required to fully register with the Agency's Employment Services system, IllinoisJobLink.com. A completed registration will allow employers access to thousands of candidates' resumes and provide claimants with extensive employment services such as free recruiters, hiring events, job fairs and more. IDES has increased the number of Employment Services staff, which allows for even more outreach opportunities and additional one-on-one services many job seekers require. Service delivery software platforms and websites are in the process of being updated to better serve the needs of our job seekers and employers.

IDES is an active member of the GRAC and participates in the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) program. Under WOTC eligible job seekers can be *pre-certified* if they reside in one of the 22 counties classified as a Rural Renewal County. Job seekers can also be *pre-certified* if they are a TANF Recipient, Veteran, Ex-Felon, Vocational Rehabilitation Referral, Summer Youth, Food Stamp Recipient, or SSI Recipient. WOTC program has been retroactively reauthorized for five years, January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2019.

IDES has trained staff offering a full range of employment services to migrant seasonal farm workers. These services include referral to jobs; staff-assisted services; referral to supportive services, career guidance, and job development. Employment Services staff refer dislocated workers to Title 1B partners, to determine the job seekers level of interest in and qualifications for additional education and training in growth industries or high demand positions. IDES also includes representatives who participate in the USDA's Rural Development program, *Homegrown by Heroes*, which helps to promote agriculture products grown by military veterans.

5. ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES (IDHS)

IDHS has a broad portfolio of services that are provided on an ongoing basis with the support of community partners. The following chart list some of the innovative initiatives focused in serving Illinois rural families (Table 8).

Human services play a vital role in ensuring that rural families have the resources to support their development and that of their community. IDHS aids low-income families by helping them secure income supports through programs such as Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) and Earned Income Tax Credits (EITC). These supports can help families living below the poverty line pay their bills and otherwise make ends meet. This is an important issue because in many parts of Illinois, rural poverty rates can be higher than in urban centers (Moser 2015).

IDHS also provides services for those with developmental and physical disabilities so that they can also live successfully in their Community. IDHS also works with other state agencies and nonprofit partners to provide job training so that customers can become financially self-sufficient. Part of helping families become self-sufficient is providing child welfare programs and support for child care.

Rural IDHS providers and facilities can help families find human services to meet their basic needs by coordinating services with human services providers. Likewise, rural human services providers may find working with healthcare providers an effective way to identify unaddressed human service needs. Connecting human services to families at an early stage can help make limited resources go further and leverage the close-knit nature of rural communities.

Table 8. Portfolio of Department of Human Services Programs Serving Rural Residents

Division	Program Name	Program Description	County or Town
DFS	Youth	Youth Intervention Services (comprehensive and community	Tazewell,
	Intervention	based individualized services to at-risk youth and their families	Livingston
	Services	to achieve family stabilization and reunification, thereby	_
		diverting or minimizing youth contact with the juvenile justice	
		and/or child welfare systems).	
DFS	Redeploy	Redeploy Illinois (provides services to youth between the ages of	LaSalle,
	Illinois	13 and 18 who are at high risk of being committed to the	Grundy,
		Department of Corrections. A fiscal incentive is provided to	Bureau
		counties to provide services to youth within their home	
		communities by building a continuum of care for youth who are	
		in the juvenile justice system. Counties link youth to a wide array	
		of needed services and supports within the home community, as	
		indicated through an individualized needs assessment. Services	
		are provided in the least restrictive manner possible, and can	
		include case management, court advocacy, education	
		assistance, individual/family/group counseling and crisis	
		intervention).	
DMH	Bridgeway	Bridgeway's Mental Health First Aid training brings this resource	Knox,
		to Knox and Henry Counties specifically targeting young adults	Henry
		and adult populations. Outreach to community is excellent and	
		the classes fill up each time it is scheduled (about quarterly).	
		Program has helped to reduce stigma for receiving mental	
		health services and increase chances that preventative care	
		received.	
DMH	Human	Human Resource Center of Edgar and Clark Counties provides	Edgar,
	Resources	consultation on peer programming, alternatives to emergency	Clark
	Center of	room care for people experiencing a psychiatric illness, library of	
	Edgar	resources for other best practices and evidence-based practice	
	and Clark	for developing peer services, as well as direct consultation (free)	
	Counties	on Individual Placement and Support (IPS), a very successful job	
		placement module for people with a mental illness.	
DMH	North	North Central BHS is the lead agency in a collaboration of several	Stark,
	Central	rural social service providers. This work has created the Stark	Marshall
	Behavioral	and Marshall County Mental Health Task Force, which is a	
	Health	project to bring several hours of mental health services and	
	Systems	Mental Health First Aid training to these two rural counties each	
		week. Has helped to bring more equal access to standard mental	
		health services.	

	Program	Program	County or
Division	Name	Description	Town
DMH	Rosecrance	Rosecrance is using Telehealth technology to fill the gap for community need for psychiatric services. Trying to replace access lost due to budget reductions in FY16. Winnebago and Boone Counties. Also, this agency also reduces need for emergency room and inpatient care by using mobile outreach services for people in psychiatric crisis.	Winnebago, Boone
DMH	Sinnissippi Centers	Sinnissippi Centers provides an innovative outreach program to Ogle, Whiteside, Carrol, and Lee counties. Uses the Mental Health First Aid module to educate people in the community about MH issues. Also, this agency uses agency vehicles to transport people in rural areas to service sites.	Ogle, Whiteside, Carrol, Lee
DASA	The Illinois Family Resource Center (FRC)	The goal of the FRC is to ensure that there is family involvement and input in all aspects of Adolescent/transitional youth care within the Illinois substance abuse treatment system. For Youth (12-17) and Transitional Adults (18-25), the FRC center	Coles
		provides information to help them determine whether there's a substance use problem, or assist them with what they can do if someone they care about has a problem. For Parents, the FRC provides information about adolescent and transitional aged youth substance use issues. For Community Based Treatment Providers, information is offered related to delivering substance use services to adolescent/transitional aged youth and their parents or significant others.	
DRS	Perry County Counseling Center	Perry County Counseling Center offers a wide range of mental health and employment services to both people with mental illness and people with developmental disabilities. PCCC recently completed an employment pilot project that applied Individualized Placements and Supports (a proven employment delivery model) for people with mental illness to people with developmental disabilities. Because of its success PCCC will continue to use IPS to serve people with developmental disabilities.	Benton, Murphysboro
DRS	Community Resource Center	Community Resource Center offers a wide range of people with mental illness and people with developmental disabilities. Services such as mental health, emergency assistance, life skills education, client advocacy, community advocacy, and employment services. CRC recently completed an employment pilot project that applied Individualized Placements and Supports (a proven employment delivery model) for people with mental illness to people with developmental disabilities. Because of its success CRC will continue to use IPS to serve people with developmental disabilities.	Jackson

6. ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES (IDNR)

a. Economic Development

The IDNR has sites across the state, mainly in rural areas. These sites drive economic development by bringing in local, state, national, and international tourists. Different locations offer different experiences, like the cultural experience of going back in time at the Fort Massac encampment, which brings 200,000 visitors a year to Metropolis. Visitors can also see the largest collection of prehistoric rock art at Piney Creak Ravine State Natural Area or experience the extraordinary natural features at Starved Rock State Park in Utica and Giant City State Park in Makanda. From across the United States, hunters, campers, hikers, bikers, bird-watchers and many others interested in outdoor recreation find Illinois to be a top destination. These visitors buy sporting goods, fill hotel beds, stock up on food and supplies, purchase gas, and patronize local businesses in rural communities surrounding IDNR sites.

IDNR regulates many outdoor recreational activities in rural areas including hunting and fishing, which have a large economic impact. With about 200,000 resident hunters and almost 40,000 nonresident hunters, it is estimated that annual retail sales related to hunting in Illinois are more than \$1.2 billion. Economic opportunities for rural landowners through the IDNR include the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program and the Illinois Recreational Access Program. The IDNR Division of Forest Resources provides the Federal Excess Personal Property Program and the Fire Fighter Property Program to improve local fire programs as well as the Volunteer Fire Assistance Grant that was developed to save lives and protect property from fires in unprotected or inadequately protected rural areas.

b. Education

IDNR's Outdoor Recreation and Retention division serves to teach youth about shooting sports and responsible hunting. In 2017, the National Archery in Schools Program (NASP) state shoot in Illinois had 1,026 kids registered. The Scholastic Clay Target Program (SCTP) had 587 kids registered for the 2016 state shoot. IDNR's Safety Education division certified 13,012 students to be eligible to hunt, boat, trap, or snowmobile in Illinois.

The IDNR Division of Education provides workshops through the ENTICE (Environment and Nature Training Institute for Conservation Education) program to reach educators at locations throughout the state. Many of the workshops are held in rural areas of Illinois. The locations are determined mainly by the workshop topic, but we do work to offer the same type of workshop throughout the state, where possible. For example, we worked in partnership with the US Forest Service to offer an "Illinois Butterflies" workshop in southern Illinois. This workshop topic has also been offered in partnership with nature centers in central and northern Illinois so that most educators in the state have access to the information, resources and Professional Development Hours available. We also offer several ENTICE workshops in online format, and those have been popular with educators in rural Illinois.

All of our publications, lessons, resource information and other teaching tools are available online. We attend teachers' conferences throughout the state to make teachers aware of our resources and programs. We offer loan programs for resources trunks in all areas of the state. Our grant programs for developing schoolyard wildlife habitat areas and to allow the teachers to take their students on natural resources-related field trips are popular with teachers in rural areas of the state and provide them with opportunities that they might not otherwise have to expand the scope of their educational programs.

7. ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH (IDPH)

a. Overview

The mission of the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) is to protect the health and wellness of Illinois residents through prevention, health promotion, regulation, and control of disease and injury. This mission is accomplished by: providing leadership for public health at both the State and federal level; identifying, analyzing and tracking health trends; defining problems and guiding public health action; delivering public health related services; and promoting health equity.

IDPH undertakes the following activities to fulfill its mission:

- Protects the public from infectious diseases, including vaccine-preventable diseases, other communicable diseases, and the prevention and treatment of HIV and sexually transmitted infections;
- Evaluates data and identifying trends that will guide Illinois health policy;
- Ensures environmental safety by inspecting public swimming pools, reducing the risk of vector borne diseases by monitoring insect and bird populations, and inspecting homes and other buildings to prevent lead poisoning;
- Provides leadership for food safety and sanitation, responding to complaints, and participating in food recalls;
- Regulates long term care facilities to ensure that vulnerable populations are safe and protected;
- Works as a lead agency for emergency and disaster preparedness to ensure an immediate and coordinated response to public health emergencies; and
- Provides programming and education about disease prevention and healthy behaviors to empower communities.

b. Center for Rural Health

IDPH's Center for Rural Health (Center) was created in 1989 to help the agency achieve its mission in rural and underserved areas. The Center provides consultation and technical assistance to residents, organizations, and providers to help identify health care issues, discuss potential solutions, convene stakeholders, and implement plans of action.

The Center also collects and evaluates health professional data for Illinois. These data are used to designate Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs), which help identify shortages of primary care, mental health, and dental providers. IDPH uses these designations for many purposes, including the following programs for rural and underserved areas: State Loan Repayment (SLRP), Medical Student Scholarship Program (MSSP), Nursing Education Scholarship (NESP), Allied Health Scholarship, and J-1 Visa Waiver. Here are more details about these important health care workforce programs:

- SLRP provides funds to repay educational loans of primary care physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, nurse midwives, dentists, and psychiatrists. To receive assistance, providers agree to work at a non-profit medical facility in a HPSA in Illinois.
- MSSP provides scholarship assistance to individuals attending medical school in Illinois to become primary care physicians. For each year of assistance, recipients work a corresponding number of years at a medical facility in a HPSA in Illinois. Due to a lack of funding, the program is currently unavailable.

- NESP provides assistance to individuals pursuing a nursing degree or certificate. For each year of
 assistance, recipients work a corresponding number of years at a medical facility in Illinois
 providing direct patient care.
- Allied health scholarships provide assistance for individuals to become nurse practitioners, nurse anesthetists, physician assistants, and nurse midwives. For each year of assistance, the recipient works a corresponding number of years at a medical facility in a HPSA in Illinois. Due to a lack of funding, the program is currently unavailable.
- J-1 Visa Waivers allow foreign medical graduates to practice for three years after completing training if they practice at a medical facility located in a HPSA in Illinois.

8. ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (IDOT)

Transportation is the lifeblood of Illinois and the asset that distinguishes our state from the rest of the country. Our roads, transit systems, railroads and airports make Illinois the transportation hub of North America and provide us with the global economic advantage other states can only dream to have. Our infrastructure is rich with possibilities: Illinois has the third-largest interstate and bridge system. It is home to the largest transit system and the world's busiest airport. It is the only state where all Class I railroads operate. The state is bordered by rivers and the only connection between the Great Lakes and the Gulf of Mexico.

At the center of all of this activity is the strength and economic contributions of rural Illinois. Consider: Of the 16,000 total miles of highway under the state's jurisdiction, almost 10,500 miles serve a rural population. Passenger rail connects 25 communities Downstate, drawing a direct line between the state's great institutions and serving as a catalyst for tourism and economic opportunity. The state's aviation system is one of the largest in the nation, comprised of more than 830 individual landing facilities, from O'Hare International Airport in Chicago, to municipal general aviation airports and private grass strips in farm fields.

IDOT strives to build connections between urban and rural through all of these modes. To that end, IDOT supports the state's rural population and economy through a variety of projects and programs:

- IDOT's Office of Planning in Programming distributed \$500,000 on a competitive basis in FY16 to rural planning organizations for assistance in transportation planning. Another \$500,000 in rural planning funds will be distributed in FY18.
- A new initiative with the Illinois Soybean Association will pair IDOT with rural planning councils to identify corridors critical to freight movement in Illinois and help prioritize improvements.
- IDOT's Division of Aeronautics assists with the creation, improvement and continued operations
 of both private and public airports through financial assistance, inspection and technical
 oversight. According to earlier economic impact studies, aviation contributes nearly \$41 billion
 annually to the state's economy, much of that happening in rural locations.
- The Division of Intermodal Project Implementation's Downstate Capital Program consists of a variety of transit projects in rural communities, from facility construction to bus repairs and computer purchases. Construction projects include bus storage facilities, multimodal stations, as well as maintenance, administrative and dispatch facilities.
- The Consolidated Vehicle Procurement program exists as IDOT's chief capital program for equipping service providers many serving rural populations with rolling stock that can serve riders with disabilities. For many in communities with no transportation options, these vehicles are the only means to leave home in rural Illinois. In 2016, the program completed deliveries of

- rolling stock awards to more than 100 individual grantees comprised of 352 vehicles, purchased with \$19 million in combined federal and state funds. In 2017, the program anticipates making awards for approximately 130 vehicles leveraging approximately \$6 million in combined federal and state funds.
- Under a \$2.5 million grant recently awarded through IDOT's Rail Freight Program, the Indiana Rail Road Company will replace eight bridges on their line between Robinson and Newton. The project is scheduled to take three years and cost \$5 million, with the railroad providing half of the cost. The project will reduce maintenance expenses for the railroad and allow the major Illinois industries along this line to continue to receive the lower costs of shipping.

On the highways side of IDOT, several major projects were recently completed or under construction that will maintain a flow of commerce in rural areas for generations to come.

- The U.S. 52-Illinois 64 bridge linking Savanna, Illinois and Sabula, Iowa, is rich with history. Located about 150 miles west of Chicago, it was constructed in 1932 as a private toll bridge. The bridge helped to put the region on the map by ushering in a new era of transportation and commerce. In 1999, the bridge was added to the National Register of Historic Places. To this day, it still provides a crucial link between Illinois and Iowa, with the nearest alternate crossing over the Mississippi River more than 20 miles away. Construction started last year on its \$81 million replacement, which will open to traffic in late 2017.
- Late last year, IDOT completed a remake of Interstate 57/70 through Effingham, a key freight
 corridor for the east central section of Illinois. The \$170 million modernization project added a
 third lane in each direction. Interchanges were reconstructed to add capacity and improve
 traffic flow. Thirteen bridges were rebuilt or rehabilitated, while a bike and pedestrian bridge
 was added to connect trails on both sides of the interstate.
- Progress continues on a replacement for the 75-year-old structurally deficient and functionally obsolete bridge that carries Illinois 104 across the Illinois River in Meredosia. The \$75 million project is expected to be open in 2018. This is the first tied-arch bridge undertaken by IDOT in decades.
- The third and final phase of the \$102.3 million project to widen Illinois 29 to four lanes between Rochester and Taylorville was finished in October 2016, following completion of a five-mile section of new four-lane road in 2004 between Rochester and Berry and a 6.7-mile section in 2006 between Edinburg and Taylorville. The final 7.25-mile stretch of updated highway ended a decade of construction to widen the nearly 20-mile stretch of highway to four lanes.

9. ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT ON AGING

a. Overview

The Illinois Department on Aging was created by the State Legislature in 1973 to improve the quality of life for Illinois' senior citizens by coordinating programs and services enabling older adults to preserve their independence as long as possible. It is the single State agency in Illinois authorized to receive and dispense Federal Older Americans Act funds, as well as specific State funds, through Area Agencies on Aging and community-based service providers.

The legislative mandate of the Illinois Department on Aging is to provide a comprehensive and coordinated service system for the State's approximately two million older adults, giving high priority to those in greatest need; to conduct studies and research into the needs and problems of the elderly; and to ensure participation by older adults in the planning and operation of all phases of the system. In

fulfilling its mission, the Department responds to the dynamic needs of society's aging population through a variety of activities including:

- Planning, implementing and monitoring integrated service systems;
- Coordinating and assisting the efforts of local community agencies;
- Advocating for the needs of the State's elderly population; and
- Cooperating with Federal, State, local and other agencies to develop programs and initiatives.

b. Area Agencies on Aging

The state of Illinois is divided into 13 Planning and Service Areas (PSAs). The Department on Aging designates one Area Agency on Aging (AAA) for each PSA. In Illinois, 12 not-for-profit agencies and one unit of local government serve as Area Agencies on Aging. Each AAA is responsible for planning, coordinating, and advocating for the development of a comprehensive and coordinated system of services for the elderly and caregivers within the boundaries of the individual PSAs. The Department's major program and services provided annually include the following:

- Community Care Program (CCP). The CCP helps senior citizens to remain in their own homes by
 providing in-home and community-based services. Enrollment in CCP has significantly grown
 over the past 10 years due to the aging of the population in Illinois. It is estimated that
 approximately 80,000 older adults will receive services through CCP each month. Services
 offered through CCP include case management, adult day service, emergency home response,
 and homemaker services;
- Adult Protective Services (APS) Program. The APS Program responds to reports of alleged abuse, neglect, and exploitation of older adults and adults with disabilities who live at home and work to resolve the abusive situations. The APS Program received 15,924 reports of abuse, neglect and exploitation in 2016;
- Long Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP). The LTCOP provides a forum for senior citizens
 to advocate for their rights. Senior citizens or their advocates can contact the LTCOP if there are
 problems with services provided;
- Senior Health Insurance Program (SHIP). SHIP is a free statewide health insurance counseling service for Medicare beneficiaries and their caregivers. SHIP currently has 350 offices throughout the state staffed by a total of 1,100 volunteer counselors. In 2016, the Illinois SHIP counselors assisted over 124,000 Medicare beneficiaries and provided outreach and education about Medicare benefits and choices for Medicare coverage in 1,900 events such as community presentations and information exhibits. SHIP activities align with the Illinois Department on Aging's mission to help older individuals maintain their health and independence while remaining in their home and communities; and
- Older Americans Act Service Program. The AAAs and their service providers across Illinois
 provide an array of services to meet the individual needs of older persons which include, but are
 not limited to access services such as transportation, in-home services such as home delivered
 meals and housekeeping, community-based services such as congregate meals, family caregiver
 services such as respite support and counseling, and the Senior Community Service Employment
 Program, which provides job training and support for senior citizens seeking employment.

10. ILLINOIS ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (IEPA)

The IEPA provides oversight and enforces regulations in the land, water, and air of Illinois. It also takes a leading role in restoring and improving water, air, and soil that has become degraded due to human activity. The "Indian Creek Watershed Project: A lesson for the Nation, exemplifies a voluntary approach to water quality improvement efforts.

Initiated in 2006 and completed in 2016 the Indian Creek project became a national model for showing how a public/private partnership can improve water quality in a rural area serving rural public water supplies. Indian Creek watershed covers 51,243 acres in north-central Illinois, specifically southern Livingston County, three small towns and several unincorporated areas are within this watershed, agriculture is the predominate occupation. In 2012 the Vermilion River, which is the source of drinking water for two communities (Streator and Pontiac) and Indian Creek is tributary to, was identified as being impaired for nitrates (which is a significant public water supply issue), total nitrogen, sediment and total suspended solids. These pollutants and often associated with agricultural activities and may be positively influenced by the adoption of agricultural conservation systems and best management practices (BMPs) on farmland. Based on this finding the Indian Creek Watershed Project was initiated. The key concepts at the heart of the project were:

- The importance of locally led conservation efforts;
- The power of including stakeholders in the watershed from on and off the farm;
- Cooperation among conservation entities within the watershed;
- Demonstrations of key conservation practices under local conditions; and
- The impact of applying priority conservation practices by at least 50% of the producers in a small watershed to improve water quality in the receiving surface waters.

Livingston County Soil and Water Conservation District was the local lead for the project, they worked closely with the local Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office and the local watershed steering committee to organize the project and secure funding through NRCS's Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative. Simultaneously, Conservation Technology Information Center (CTIC) secured a nonpoint source pollution control grant from Illinois EPA, funded through Section 319 of the Clean Water Act.

The six year project was a model program, a shining example of organization and leadership; a showcase for public/private partnerships; a case study in demonstration plots and outreach; a watershed studied for water chemistry and social sciences; and a case study for organizers in watersheds across the nation, Indian Creek's impact will be felt well beyond its banks.

The payoffs of the project became clear during the second half of the project, when commodity prices crashed. The demonstrations continued, the steering committee held together, improvements in water quality were documented and acreage under conservation practices held above the targeted 50% mark in spite of the challenges facing the producers in the watershed. Born in good times and maintained through tough times, the conservation lessons learned from this program show:

- No downstream increase in nitrate concentrations;
- The majority of annual nitrate export occurs during large storm events (pointing towards the importance of conservation practices); and
- A decreasing trend of nitrate export over time was detected. For more information on this successful project please visit: http://www.ctic.purdue.edu/IndianCreek/.

11. ILLINOIS FINANCE AUTHORITY (IFA)

a. IFA Background and Organization

Since our creation in January 2004, the Illinois Finance Authority (IFA) has provided access to low-cost capital to public and private institutions that are aligned with our mission of fostering economic development, creating and retaining jobs, and improving quality of life for Illinois residents. To date, our conduit financing programs have spanned every county and helped capitalize thousands of projects, assisting farmers and agri-businesses, business and industry, school districts and higher education institutions, healthcare facilities, cultural and social entities, and local governments develop, upgrade, expand, and sustain their operations and services.

IFA is a body politic and corporate of the State of Illinois created through the consolidation and elimination of seven State authorities and entities. We are authorized by the Illinois Finance Authority Act to issue tax-exempt and taxable bonds and to make and guarantee non-conventional loans. We do not receive appropriated funding from the State and operate at no cost to the taxpayer.

Governing the IFA is a fifteen-member, non-paid Board appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. Leading the IFA team is the Executive Director, who is nominated by the Governor and appointed by the Board. The Board of Directors, the Executive Director and the IFA staff offer a breadth of combined experience in economic development, industrial development, small business management, real estate development, housing, health facilities financing, local government financing, infrastructure financing and public-private partnerships.

b. IFA Rural Agricultural Financing

Serving Illinois' diverse farm and agri-businesses, IFA provides access to low-cost capital to help seed, grow and sustain your business. Our agriculture team offers the market expertise and flexibility to match the right program for your needs — whether you're a beginning farmer or an established producer seeking financing to purchase land, diversify or expand your enterprise, or consolidate or restructure debt.

One of IFA's more popular programs is the Beginning Farmer Bond. This program offers the Originating Bank the opportunity to obtain tax exempt funds to Beginning Farmers for the purchase of farm real estate. Being tax exempt, the bank can pass the savings to the young Beginning Farmer. IFA's hopes their programs will retain productive and profitable farmers in local communities, that will contribute back to the community in the future. In 2017, IFA's Board approved 22 requests relating to 1,251.93 acres in 11 counties in Illinois.

Under the Agricultural Programs, IFA supports several types of projects including a farmer's debt restructuring loan guarantee, specialized livestock loan guarantee, farmer's working capital guarantee, young farmer guarantee, and the agri-industry guarantee. IFA's focus is to assist farmers in their success by mitigating risk, allowing banks' to offer lower rates via lower risk.

c. Education

As stated above, IFA offers bonds relating to education. An example of IFA's involvement in the rural area would be a \$15,000,000 Bond relating to the school district in Harrisburg, Illinois in 2016. IFA has also been involved in financing of renovation and expansion in several universities throughout Illinois.

d. Medical

IFA has financed several renovation and expansion projections of larger hospital groups throughout Illinois. IFA is also involved in smaller community hospitals such as Passavant Hospital in Jacksonville, Illinois, a \$22,000,000 Bond for a renovation and expansion project. Also, in previous years, IFA financed the Southern Illinois Healthcare system for over \$120 million.

e. Government

Recently, IFA has developed a pilot program for Local Government Loan Program to help meet the need of capital purchases of small government needing less than \$1.5 million. The repayment of these loans will be designated funds pledged by that local government's source. As stated this is currently in the pilot stage. In 2013, IFA approved a local government loan to the Village of West Salem not to exceed \$150,000, subject receipt of a grant of \$387,000.

f. Other Programs

Recently, IFA has been approved to provide guarantees on Veterans' business loans originated by local Community Banks. This program is similar to IFA's agricultural Guarantee program. However, as this is a new program the guidelines and requirements are being developed.

IFA has several products that might meet your community needs, including the following:

- 1. USDA Relending Rural Development Loans;
- 2. Participation Loans; and
- 3. Industrial Revenue Bonds.

IFA is very proud to be able to help local community through the Fire Truck Revolving Loan and the Ambulance Revolving Programs. These programs are designed to provide zero percent or low income loans to communities for purchase of Fire Trucks and Ambulances. The Office of the State Fire Marshal provided the funds with IFA completing the credit approval and allocation of funds for the purchase.

In 2017, IFA awarded twenty-five (25) Fire Departments or Protection Districts a total of \$7.2 million to the purchase of a fire truck within their communities. These loan requests ranged from \$60,000 to \$350,000. Since 2005, IFA has awarded more than 178 fire Departments of Protection Districts a total of \$32.5 million.

In 2016, IFA reviewed and approved 17 applications for a total request of \$1.7 million for local communities' ambulance purchases. Since the beginning of this program in 2009, IFA has award 25 departments for a total of \$2.4 million.

12. ILLINOIS HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (IHDA)

<u>Home Ownership:</u> From January 1 through December 2, 2016, first-time homebuyers in 58 rural counties were provided 908 loans totaling \$84 million in funds assisting rural Illinois homebuyers. These were done through IHDA's @HomeIllinois Program. In 2016, \$9 million was also awarded to local programs to provide homeowner rehabilitation assistance to 294 units, primarily in rural communities. This was done through IHDA's Single Family Rehabilitation Program and the Home Accessibility Program.

<u>Multi-Family:</u> From January 1 through December 2, 2016, IHDA's Board approved financing and tax credit allocations of approximately \$73.4 million for 8 rental housing projects for family, elderly, homeless and special needs populations in rural communities of Illinois. These funds helped develop multi-family projects in six different rural counties, including Montgomery, Williamson, Stephenson, DeKalb, Christian, and Whiteside, and helped create or preserve 665 units of affordable housing for low-income residents of rural communities.

Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC): An allocation of Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTCs) to a proposed affordable housing development can help to generate sufficient amount of equity for the development. IHDA's Multifamily Finance Department allocates the LIHTCs through a federally required Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP), which is generally determined by geographic area, which includes Non-Metropolitan (Including Rural Areas). As part of IHDA's program and policies, the Low Income Housing Tax Credit program sets aside 18% of its funding (approximately \$4 million/per year) toward projects located in non-metro areas.

<u>Illinois Affordable Housing Trust Fund (IAHTF)</u>: The Illinois Affordable Housing Trust Fund (IAHTF) was established to provide grants, and loans for the acquisition, construction, and rehabilitation of multifamily and single family developments. There is a set-aside policy of 15% of the Illinois Affordable Housing Trust Fund towards non-metro/rural areas. IHDA statewide programs in 2016 that were funded through IAHTF include the Single Family Rehabilitation Program (\$6 million/21 project sponsors) and the Home Accessibility Program (\$3 million/15 project sponsors).

Rural Housing Technical Assistance: IHDA is currently developing a network of State universities, community-based organizations, regional planning councils, and community stakeholders to perform technical assistance and build local capacity for planning in rural communities, especially regarding community revitalization. It is anticipated that these efforts will also result in assembling more competitive funding applications, especially under the IHDA's Low Income Housing Credit (LIHTC) Program. For information regarding Technical Assistance for planning, please reach out directly to Amy Bashiti: abashiti@ihda.org / 312-836-7438.

Other Rural Programs: Under the Abandoned Properties Program (APP), monies are appropriated from the ARPMR (foreclosure filling fees) and used by IHDA to provide grants to municipalities and counties to secure, maintain, demolish, or rehabilitate abandoned residential properties within their jurisdictions. In 2016, IHDA provided \$ 1.25 million in grants to 28 municipalities and counties in rural Illinois.

Another important program that assisted rural Illinois communities in 2016, was IHDA's Blight Reduction Program (BRP). BRP complements the State-funded Abandoned Properties Program (mentioned above) by reducing blight for the end purpose of land reuse, repurposing, and/or redevelopment that benefits the surrounding residential community and helps reduce foreclosures.

IHDA utilizes the BRP fund to decrease preventable foreclosures and stabilize neighborhoods by supporting Illinois units of local government and their non-profit partners as they target blighted, vacant, residential properties in specific communities for residential real property acquisition, demolition, greening, and eventual re-use or redevelopment. In 2016, BRP provided \$4.69 million and partnered with 7 non-profit partners in 5 downstate counties.

7th **Annual Governor's Conference on Affordable Housing Champion Awards:** The conference was held on March 13th - 14th in Chicago. This year's winner of the Jon Linfield Award for the most distinguished development in a rural, small town, or non-metropolitan area was the *Macoupin Homes* completed by *Macoupin Housing Services*.

13. ILLINOIS INSTITUTE FOR RURAL AFFAIRS (IIRA), WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY (WIU)

The IIRA was founded in 1989 as a charter member of the GRAC. For over a quarter century, the IIRA has delivered an array of community and economic development technical assistance to rural communities. The IIRA hosts the MAPPING (Management and Planning Programs in Nonmetropolitan Groups) strategic visioning program. It adopts an asset-based, rather than a needs-based approach to help communities create plans for future development. Communities that have recently gone through the MAPPING program include Walnut, Savannah, Stockton, and Oregon, Illinois.

The IIRA also operates a Peace Corps Fellows (PCF) program. Returned Peace Corps Volunteers can enroll in one of 10 M.A. degree programs at WIU. After completing 2-3 semesters on the WIU campus, the PCF is assigned to an 11-month internship in a rural Illinois community. Typically, a community will have gone through the MAPPING process to identify some specific community and economic development goals. Then the PCF is placed in that community to help it achieve those goals. Currently, PCFs are serving in Macomb, Carbondale, Stockton, and Springfield, IL.

Other programs operated by the IIRA include: a Small Business Development Center (SBDC) to help entrepreneurs write sound business plans to launch new businesses; a Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) to help businesses sell goods and services to local, state, and federal government agencies. In January 2017, the IIRA opened a second SBDC and an International Trade Center on the WIU-Quad Cities in Moline. The IIRA also hosts the Rural Transit Assistance Center (RTAC), which provides training to rural transit drivers and helps plan for demand-response public transit services in rural communities; and the Value-Added Sustainable Development Center (VASDC) which provides assistance to renewable energy, local foods, and value added agriculture projects. VASDC has also secured a \$200,000 USDA Rural Cooperative Development grant to help promote cooperatives and the community-supported businesses mentioned elsewhere in this report. Finally, the IIRA has also launched a new M.A. degree in Community and Economic Development. This new degree is offered in a hybrid fashion at the WIU-Quad Cities campus to provide students with flexibility so that they can pursue this graduate degree while working.

14. ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION (ISBE)

Illinois' Every Students Succeeds Act (ESSA) State Plan holds all students to the same high expectations and holds all schools accountable for ensuring equity – for providing the differentiated supports each individual child needs.

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) adopted seven ambitious and measureable goals in September 2015. Four of the goals also serve as the state's long-term goals under ESSA:

- Ninety percent or more of third-grade students are reading at or above grade level;
- Ninety percent or more of fifth-grade students meet or exceed expectations in mathematics;
- Ninety percent or more of ninth-grade students are on track to graduate with their cohort; and
- Ninety percent or more of students graduate from high school ready for college and career.

ISBE's efforts to expand high-speed internet access and free digital resources strive to help resource-challenged rural schools provide the equitable and personalized support students need to meet Illinois' long-term goals by 2032.

ISBE's partnership with Governor Bruce Rauner and EducationSuperHighway on the Classroom Connectivity Initiative has resulted in 180,264 more Illinois students having at least the minimum internet connectivity they need. The statewide #GoOpen initiative, which Illinois joined in June 2016, promotes the use of high-quality, openly licensed educational resources in schools. Four Illinois school districts – DeKalb Community Unit School District 428, Illini Bluffs Community Unit School District 327, Macomb Community Unit School District 185, and Urbana School District 116 – stepped up at the time of the #GoOpen launch to implement a systematic approach to incorporating free online educational resources into their curricula.

ISBE's work to redesign the high school experience builds on the strengths and opportunities of rural schools to help all students graduate with a clear direction and the necessary tools to become empowered and contributing members of their communities.

The Incentive Funding Grant provides support to more than 300 secondary and postsecondary agricultural education programs for program and curriculum improvement. The formula for the grant rewards quality: The more quality indicators a program achieves, the more funds a program receives. The Facilitating Coordination in Agricultural Education (FCAE) project and partners reach nearly 550,000 students and 38,000 teachers in prekindergarten through postsecondary settings.

Student enrollment in agricultural education secondary programs has nearly tripled since the inception of the FCAE project and Incentive Funding Grant line item. School districts have established an average of seven new agricultural education program per year in each of the last five years. Student net earnings have totaled more than \$11.67 million from work-based learning projects connected to their classroom training.

ISBE wants students not only to gain meaningful career experiences during high school but also to gain credit for those experiences that can advance their opportunities with potential employers and postsecondary institutions. Nearly 30 percent of agricultural education programs offer dual credit opportunities for students.

Dual enrollment, Advanced Placement (AP), and International Baccalaureate courses offer students the opportunity to earn college credit, securing a leg up in college costs and completion time before even enrolling. Illinois ranks fourth in the nation for increasing the percentage of graduates earning a 3 or higher on an AP exam during high school. The College Board named Joliet Township High School District 204 the Advanced Placement District of the Year among small-sized school districts.

The Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Act requires ISBE to work with stakeholders and other state agencies to create specific industry-aligned college and career pathway endorsements on high school diplomas. Beginning with the class of 2020, high school graduates will be able to earn endorsements after completing career-focused instructional sequences equivalent to two years of coursework within fields such as marketing, architecture and construction, health sciences, and energy.

ISBE provides technical assistance and leadership to Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs at 673 high schools. CTE prepares students for high-skill, high-wage, or high-demand occupations. Approximately 96 percent of students who completed CTE programs also graduated from high school with experiences in sectors shown to be in demand by labor market analyses.

Illinois' ESSA State Plan creates opportunities to rethink how ISBE supports all schools and students across the state and throughout the continuum of education. ISBE is committed to supporting rural schools in cultivating thriving learning communities that prepare all students for success.

15. NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY (NIU), CENTER FOR GOVERNMENTAL STUDIES (CGS)

The CGS is working on several research/application projects that can benefit rural Illinois in the future. These projects help inform state policy and local decisions about opportunities to invest in rural counties and help reverse the current slow growth or downward trends in some rural areas.

First, in collaboration with the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development and the UW-Extension, CGS staff is working to identify new investment strategies using local funds for businesses. Community supported enterprises where local groups pool their funds to invest in important local businesses are gaining in popularity across the U.S. The research is intended to prepare a guidebook that can be used by local development groups to launch these enterprises, many or most of which are in rural areas. Illinois has similar efforts underway in Washburn and Toulon. A copy of the project report is at: http://cgs.niu.edu/Reports/Emergence-and-Growth-of-Community-Supported-Enterprises.pdf.

Second, CGS staff has examined trends in labor force participation rates especially in non-metro areas. These rates have been declining in recent years, adding to the pressures on work force availability in the future. Strategies to increase student participation in apprenticeships and to retain experienced workers in the work force longer are options being tried in other areas and which rural Illinois can pursue further. A report is available at: http://cgs.niu.edu/Policy_Profiles/june_2017.pdf.

Third, research continues on the need, especially in rural areas with shrinking populations, to review opportunities and find ways to modernize local governmental structure. CGS staff are examining shared service arrangements in local governments to identify possible applications in rural settings based on reviews of experiences with policies in other states and success stories in Illinois. Rural areas are especially affected government fragmentation when populations decline and make financing more difficult.

Fourth, CGS continues to partner with the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family services, supporting rural providers throughout the state thru its Illinois Health Information Technology Regional Extension Center (ILHITREC). Regional Extension Centers were established as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, which authorized the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to provide incentive payments to eligible professionals and eligible hospitals participating in Medicare and Medicaid programs that are meaningful users of certified Electronic Health Record

(EHR) technology. The goal of these programs is to reduce healthcare costs and improve health outcomes. ILHITREC supports providers statewide but finds rural practices most in need of support in these programs often due to limited access to appropriately skilled workforce. To date, Illinois healthcare organizations have received more than \$565 million in incentive payments, creating thousands of jobs and economic growth in the state.

Rural Illinois communities offer many attractive opportunities for local investment and development that, due to their small size, may be overlooked. Best practices both within Illinois and in other states are being explored to find innovative approaches that can be successfully implemented in Illinois and align with GRAC endeavors.

16. RURAL PARTNERS, THE ILLINOIS RURAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Rural Partners is the federally designated rural development council for Illinois. Rural Partners is a statewide, member driven and member supported forum that links individuals, businesses, organizations and communities with public and private resources to maximize the potential of rural Illinois. Rural Partners focuses on improving the quality of life for individuals and communities across the state, through efforts that support economic vitality, quality of life and leadership development. Rural Partners members represent local, state and federal government agencies; non-profit organizations; communities; private businesses; and individuals. Its strength comes from its diverse, informed and engaged membership.

Rural Partners supports projects and participates in organizations and forums to advocate for rural development issues, including collaborating with the IIRA and the GRAC, chaired by the Illinois Lt. Governor, to host a statewide conference focused on rural development. In 2017, 255 people attended the conference in Springfield, Illinois. Guest speakers included Illinois Governor Bruce Rauner, and Lt. Governor Evelyn Sanguinetti. Conference presentation topics included working with manufacturers, TIF districts, rural development after the recession, rural arts and creativity, telepharmacy, crowdfunding, population migration, rural revitalization, and more.

Rural Partners and its constituent members work with the GRAC and the IIRA to update the *Rural Illinois Resource Guide*, which is a searchable, online database, representing the most comprehensive collection of rural development resources in Illinois. Entries in the database include federal, state, local, and nonprofit organizations with a primary mission focused on rural development, and sources of grants, low-interest and forgivable loans, technical assistance, research, and other items of interest to rural community stakeholders. Rural Partners and several constituent members successfully wrote an application to the Stronger Economies Together (SET) program. SET is a University of Illinois Extension/USDA Rural Development program. Rural Partners members serve in advisory roles to the Illinois SET initiative, and have successfully completed SET projects in four regions of the state. Rural Partners and its members participate in rural development policy forums including the GRAC, University of Illinois Extension Partners, Governor's Taskforce on the Creative Economy, the Illinois Statewide Independent Living Council, Township Officials of Illinois, the Illinois Comptroller's Rural Advisory Board, and the National Partners for Rural America (PRA) among other forums. Illinois Rural Partners member Jerry Townsend serves as past president of PRA. For more information: http://www.ruralpartners.org.

17. SIU School of Medicine – Center for Rural Health & Social Service Development

SIU School of Medicine (SOM) and Health Care (HC) Report for Rural Health is comprised of initiatives in the clinical, research, educational, and social services areas. The report is divided into two sections reporting on TeleHealth, and the Center for Rural Health and Social Service Development (CRHSSD).

a. Telehealth

SIU SOM and HC have taken a leadership role in developing a comprehensive clinical TeleHealth program that brings rural health care needs and SIU clinical resources together. Using a mixture of high-definition TeleHealth carts and clinical workstations, SIU TeleHealth and Video Services has deployed TeleHealth into 25 locations in Central and Southern Illinois. This deployment has brought over 20 clinical specialties to rural areas where little or no specialty care is available. A full description of the services available and how TeleHealth works can be found at: http://www.siumed.edu/telehealth.

Top services provided include Pulmonary Medicine, Pediatric Subspecialty, Neurology, and High Risk Obstetrical Care. High risk OB is an important service as the rate of high risk pregnancies in Illinois is higher than the national average. By bringing Maternal-Fetal-Medicine specialists to rural areas by TeleHealth, the number of very low birth weight infants born in risk appropriate level facilities (Level III or above).

<u>Primary Goals</u>: The goals of SIU SOM and HC TeleHealth and Video Services is to provide high-quality health care to areas of Illinois where disparity exists between need and access. Leveraging primary and specialty care increases the health and well-being of populations in rural communities, and helps to stabilize economic development. SIU TeleHealth and Video Services strives for excellence in virtual care and hopes to help all patients get the care they deserve.

<u>Current Sites</u>: Memorial Health System (Carthage), Carthage Area Health (LaHarpe), Carthage Area Health (Bowen), Mason District Hospital (Havana), Illini Health System (Pittsfield), Thomas Boyd Health (Carrollton), Carlinville Area Hospital (Carlinville), Pinckneyville Hospital (Pinckneyville), Fayette County Hospital (Benton), Decatur Memorial Hospital (5 locations), DMH Express Care North (Decatur), DMH Express Care East (Decatur), DMH Family Medicine Clinic (Decatur), DMH Shelbyville Clinic (Shelbyville), East Adams Clinic (Golden), Cass County Health Department (Virginia), Passavant Hospital (Jacksonville), Memorial Hospital Taylorville (Taylorville), and Springfield SIU SOM OB/GYN Clinic (Springfield). Additionally, SIU SOM TeleHealth and Video Services hopes to add 20 more sites in 2017. Sites that wish to connect with SIU TeleHealth should contact SIU TeleHealth at 217-545-7830.

<u>State Impact Activities</u>: In 2016-17, SIU SOM TeleHealth worked on several state-wide activities to advance the use of TeleHealth across Illinois.

- 1) Working with the Lt. Governor's office, SIU TeleHealth analyzed state Medicaid regulations in six neighboring state and compiled a 30+ brief to provide the Lt. Governor's office with research and documentation on needed public policy.
- 2) SIU TeleHealth worked with and gave three webinars on TeleHealth legal and regulatory issues, reimbursement and payment, and operations for the Illinois Health and Hospital Association to increase members' understanding of TeleHealth and success criteria.
- 3) SIU TeleHealth also participated in the planning and program content (as expert speakers) of the Illinois TeleHealth Law Forums, held in Chicago and broadcast to rural sites.

4) SIU worked with legislative offices to help understand and advance HB2907, a bill to remove the requirement of a licensed health care provider as a telepresenter for telepsychiatry visits.

b. Center for Rural Health and Social Service Development (CRHSSD)

CRHSSD provides leadership and professional services – through community engagement, outreach and research – to aid in the development of the health care and social service systems of Illinois's lower thirty-four counties. CRHSSD brings together the resources of Southern Illinois University—the faculty, staff and students—to work as partners with area agencies to successfully address the most pressing health and social service problems of the region. Primary activities of the CRHSSD include:

Grant and Project Development

- Identify grant opportunities
- o Coordinate and facilitate regional development projects with partner collaboration
- Develop, coordinate, and manage grants

Research and Evaluation

- Conduct needs assessments and pilot projects
- Develop cooperative research grants and projects
- Conduct project evaluations
- Publish and present research
- Recommend policy alternatives

Training and Workforce Development

- Conduct regional training needs assessments
- Develop, coordinate, and sponsor training opportunities
- Develop curricula for funded projects
- o Provide continuing education units (CEUs) for social workers and counselors
- Facilitate SIUC student learning, mentoring, and internship opportunities

Community Engagement and Outreach

- o Represent the SIU School of Medicine in the southern 22 counties of Illinois
- Provide technical assistance and content expertise
- Serve in national, state, regional, and local capacities
- Sustain community partnerships, projects and activities

Examples of CRHSSD's Projects Relevant to Rural Illinois

Southern Illinois Regional Opioid Use Disorder Collaboration. The CRHSSD, in collaboration with the Community Behavioral Health Association of Illinois, is leading an effort to implement a regional action plan to address the Prescription Drug/Opioid Abuse issue in the southern 33 counties of Illinois. To date, three regional forums have been held with an educational conference planned for June 6th in Mt. Vernon, IL. Some of the activities completed or underway include promotion of the Illinois Prescription Monitoring Program; promotion of drug take back events; training of law enforcement in naloxone administration; development of a substance use treatment resource guide for referrals; and provide education to youth on prescription drug misuse and addiction.

EMS Summit. The EMS Summit was held on April 8, 2017 in Springfield with over 100 in attendance. Topics included mobile integrated healthcare; legislative updates; ambulance specifications; and an IDPH update.

18. University of Illinois Extension

University of Illinois Extension focuses on five areas that directly benefit rural Illinois: (i) Energy and environmental stewardship, (ii) Food safety and security, (iii) Economic development and workforce preparedness, (iv) Family health, financial security, and wellness, and (v) Youth development. These five themes are addressed through the following programs:

- Agriculture and Natural Resources. These outreach programs provide technical assistance on commercial agriculture, horticulture, energy and environmental issues, and local foods and small farms. The Extension Master Gardeners program recently celebrated its 40th anniversary. Master Gardeners have given more than two million volunteer hours to their communities across the state.
- Family and Consumer Sciences. These programs emphasize consumer economics, family life, and nutrition and wellness. Extension is working on a \$4.5 million USDA grant to help schools provide more nutritious meals while reducing food waste.
- **4-H and Youth Programs**. Through these programs, young people learn about environmental stewardship, agriculture, entrepreneurship, leadership, and can join in a range of local recreational opportunities. Over 200,000 young people participate in 4-H programs across Illinois each year.
- Community and Economic Development. These programs help Illinois community members, business owners and managers, and elected officials improve community quality of life. Specific programing helps train elected and appointed public officials, provides training in community disaster preparedness, strengthens leadership skills, helps communities foster economic development, and addresses a range of other topics relevant to rural communities.

University of Illinois Extension provides Illinois residents in all 102 counties with access to the research, new information, and knowledge generated at the University of Illinois and our nation's network of land grant institutions. Through learning partnerships that put knowledge to work, U of I Extension programs help individuals make their communities and organizations better, healthier, safer and more sustainable.

19. UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (USDA)—RURAL DEVELOPMENT, ILLINOIS

Rural Development is one of 17 USDA federal agencies. It delivers 43 financial programs to each state through a state office which oversees multiple field offices, all staffed by federal USDA employees. In Illinois, the Rural Development State Office is located in Champaign, and the state is divided geographically into four service areas. This is very important – it means people who live in your communities and counties, who go to your stores and schools, are the ones helping you access Federal financial resources to strengthen your place in rural Illinois.

As a Federal agency, Rural Development:

- Collaborates with other federal, state and local agencies, and private sector entities to leverage funding for needed community projects. This initiates and furthers community and economic development;
- Provides loans and/or grants to individuals, businesses and communities. Examples include: fire
 trucks and fire stations; storm sirens; hospitals, clinics and nursing home facilities and equipment;
 water and sewer infrastructure systems; broadband and distance learning & telemedicine access;
 operating and capital funds; technical assistance; energy efficiency and installation projects; home
 purchase and repair assistance and more; and
- In Illinois, carries a loan portfolio of nearly \$4.4 billion.

USDA Rural Development is a financial facilitator. During FY2016, Rural Development invested \$445M in Illinois, delivering \$1.2M each day at an administrative cost of 2 cents per dollar distributed. That investment assisted:

- Families 3,302 purchased or refinanced their homes and 474 made critical repairs. Affordable housing is critical to maintaining the rural labor force in Illinois;
- Businesses 50 loans/grants helped create or save 232 jobs. These investments help small businesses take advantage of emerging markets for rural-made products and also help rural manufacturers in Illinois increase production and capacity;
- Communities 43 projects were financed, resulting in 472,733 rural Illinois residents enjoying improved safety and security equipment, municipal buildings, educational support and technical assistance;
- Water and waste infrastructure –47 projects were funded, allowing 144,700 rural families access to clean, safe water; and
- Broadband service a \$617,242 investment helps expand access to health care, educational and cultural resources and helps rural businesses compete in the global economy.

USDA Rural Development: Our mission has been and continues to be: "to increase economic opportunity and improve the quality of life for all rural Americans."

PART V. CONCLUSIONS

This GRAC report has documented a range of rural development issues along with the uncertain future rural communities will have to confront. There are potential changes at the federal level, including funding cuts to USDA Rural Development programs, cuts to economic development programs offered by the Economic Development Administration (EDA), and cuts to Medicaid that could drastically reduce the resources available to rural communities. What is certain is that rural communities, despite having to confront structural issues such as population decline and federal program funding cuts, have assets that can be better deployed to improve the quality of life for their residents. And state agencies in Illinois are working with these communities to make positive changes despite ongoing demographic and economic challenges.

State agencies are working hard to deliver sound programs across the state, including rural places. And there is collaboration among many of the agencies, which is the purpose of the GRAC. GRAC members have collaborated to deliver several successful EMS conferences in Effingham. For 28 years now, the IIRA has partnered with the Office of the Lt. Governor and Rural Partners to host the rural economic development conference. The USDA and DCEO provide funding to the University of Illinois Extension and the IIRA to support rural community and economic development technical assistance. The IIRA and the USDA are partnering to host Reverse Resource Funding Fairs (RRFFs). Instead of asking communities with fundable economic development projects to travel to Springfield to seek help from one agency at a time, the RRFFs bring multiple state and federal agencies together in one place so that communities can talk to several state agencies at once.

And now, under the leadership of Lt. Governor Sanguinetti, the GRAC institutional members continue to collaborate in the four working groups advance economic development, workforce development, healthcare, and education opportunities. Together, we are investing in rural Illinois.

REFERENCES

- Achenbach, Joel and Dan Keating. 2016. A new divide in American death. *The Washington Post*. April 10. Available online: http://www.washingtonpost.com/sf/national/2016/04/10/a-new-divide-in-american-death/?utm term=.714f50615115. Accessed: June 1, 2016.
- Association for Enterprise Opportunity. 2011. Microenterprise Employment Statistics in the United States by Rural-Urban Breakout. Available online: http://www.aeoworks.org/pdf/statistics/US%20RuralUrban%20Breakout%202011.pdf. Accessed: July 30, 2017.
- Association of Equipment Manufacturers. 2016. Small-Tractor Sales Bolster Overall Market Growth. Available online: https://www.aem.org/news/april-2016/small-tractor-sales-bolster-overall-market-growth/. Accessed: July 3, 2017.
- Boodhoo, Niala, Christina Herman, Amanda Honigfort, and Austin Keating. 2016. Life expectancy disparities. The 21st Show. WILL-NPR, Champaign, IL. April 15. Available online: https://will.illinois.edu/21stshow/program/the-21st-life-expectancy-disparities-nuns-for-social-justice. Accessed: June 20, 2017.
- Broughton, Chad. 2014. The last refrigerator. Ten years ago today, the Maytag plant in Galesburg, Illinois, closed its doors. What's become of the town in the years since? *The Atlantic*. September 14. Available online: https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2014/09/the-last-refrigerator/380154/. Accessed: April 25, 2017.
- Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA). 2014. Regional Data: Table CA35 Personal Current Transfer Receipts, Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan portions. Available online: http://www.bea.gov/iTable/ index regional.cfm. Accessed: July 29, 2016.
- Chetty, Raj, Michael Stepner, and Sarah Abraham. 2016. The association between income and life expectancy in the United States, 2001-2014. *Journal of the American Medical Association*. 315 (16): 1750-1766. Available online: http://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/article-abstract/2513561. Accessed: July 4, 2017.
- Chinni, Dante. 2017. Rural youth chase big-city dreams. More rural high-school graduates see college not so much as a door to opportunity as a ticket out of Nowheresville. *Wall Street Journal*. June 26. Available online: https://www.wsj.com/articles/rural-youth-chase-big-city-dreams-1498478401. Accessed: June 27, 2017.
- Cochrane, Willard. 1993. *The Development of American Agriculture: A Historical Analysis, 2nd Edition*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Cromartie, John and Shawn Bucholtz. 2008. Defining the "rural" in rural America. *Amber Waves*. June 1. USDA—Economic Research Service. Available online: http://www.ers.usda.gov/amber-waves/2008-june/defining-the-%E2%80%9Crural%E2%80%9D-in-rural-america.aspx#.Vzk3ceSVEtJ. Accessed: May 15, 2016.

- Dobrin, Arthur. 2012. The effects of poverty on the brain. *Psychology Today*. October 22. Available online: https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/am-i-right/201210/the-effects-poverty-the-brain. Accessed: June 29, 2017.
- Dwyer-Lindgren, Laura, Amelia Bertozzi-Villa, and Rebecca Stubbs. 2017. Inequalities in life expectancy among US Counties, 1980 to 2014: Temporal trends and key drivers. *Journal of the America Medical Association*. 177 (7): 1003-1011. Available online: http://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamainternalmedicine/article-abstract/2626194. Accessed: July 4, 2017.
- Forstall, Richard. 1995. Illinois: Population of Counties by Decennial Census: 1900 to 1990. Washington, DC: US Census Bureau, Population Division. Available online: https://www.census.gov/population/www/censusdata/cencounts/files/il190090.txt. Accessed: June 30, 2017.
- Ginder, Roger, Kenneth Stone, and Daniel Otto. 1985. Impact of the farm financial crisis on agribusiness firms and rural communities. *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*. 67 (5): 1184-1190.
- Governor's Rural Affairs Council (GRAC). 2015. Rural Illinois: New Challenges, New Opportunities. Annual Report of the GRAC, submitted to the Governor and General Assembly. Springfield, IL: Office of the Lt. Governor, GRAC, and the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs. Available online:

 http://www.illinois.gov/ltg/issues/grac/Documents/2015-GRAC-annual-report-20150807.pdf.

 Accessed: May 15, 2016.
- Green, Andy. 2012. Flashback: Bob Dylan and Tom Petty rock the inaugural Farm Aid. *Rolling Stone*. October 25. Available online: http://www.rollingstone.com/music/videos/flashback-bob-dylan-and-tom-petty-rock-the-inaugural-farm-aid-20121025. Accessed: June 20, 2017.
- Illinois Department of Agriculture. 2017. Facts about Illinois Agriculture: General History. Available online: https://www.agr.state.il.us/general-history/. Accessed: July 3, 2017.
- Illinois Department of Public Health. 2017a. Vital Records Death Data. Available online: http://www.dph.illinois.gov/data-statistics/vital-statistics. Accessed: July 31, 2017.
- Illinois Department of Public Health. 2017b. IDPH Adverse Pregnancy Outcomes Reporting System Data. Available online: http://www.idph.state.il.us/about/epi/apors.htm. Accessed: July 31, 2017.
- John Deere. 2016. Feet on the Ground, Eyes on the Horizon: Deere & Company Annual Report 2016.

 Available online: https://s2.q4cdn.com/329009547/files/doc_financials/annual_reports/2016/2016 John-Deere-Annual-Report.pdf. Accessed: July 4, 2017.
- Kadner, Phil. 2015. Illinois schools have biggest funding gap in nation. *Chicago Tribune*. March 26. Available online: http://www.chicagotribune.com/ct-sta-kadner-sudies-st-0327-20150326-column.html. Accessed: July 1, 2017.
- Levins, Richard and Willard Cochrane. 1996. The Treadmill revisited. *Land Economics*. 72 (4): 550-553. Available online: http://www.jstor.org/stable/3146915. Accessed: June 24, 2017.
- Lipietz, Alain. 1987. Mirages and Miracles: The Crises of Global Fordism. London, UK: Verso.

- Lowrey, Annie. 2014. Income gap, meet the longevity gap. *New York Times*. March 15. Available online: http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/16/business/income-gap-meet-the-longevity-gap.html?_r=0. Accessed: June 23, 2017.
- Mattoon, Rick and Thomas Haasl. 2016. Where are the jobs? Midwest jobs recovery by state and sector. Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, Midwest Economy. November 21, 2016. Available online: http://midwest.chicagofedblogs.org/?p=2885. Accessed: July 4, 2017.
- McDermott, Kevin. 2013. 'Let my people go'. Lawmakers from outside of Chicagoland feel the frustration that comes with being marginalized. *Illinois Issues*. September. Available online: http://illinoisissues.uis.edu/archives/2013/09/letmypeople.html. Accessed: July 2, 2017.
- Oppedahl, David. 2016. The Midwest feels the sting of an extended agricultural downturn. Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, Midwest Economy. November 15, 2016. Available online: http://midwest.chicagofedblogs.org/?p=2859. Accessed: July 4, 2017.
- Orr, Richard. 1987. Farm Bureau's analysis shows crisis has passed. *Chicago Tribune*. August 31. Available online: http://articles.chicagotribune.com/1987-08-31/news/8703060001_1_farm-exports-farm-income-farm-debt. Accessed: June 25, 2017.
- Parker, Timothy. 2017. *State Fact Sheets: Illinois*. Washington, DC: Economic Research Service, United States Department of Agriculture. Available online: https://data.ers.usda.gov/reports.aspx? StateFIPS=17&StateName=Illinois&ID=17854. Accessed: July 2, 2017.
- Philpott, Tom. 2008. A reflection on the lasting legacy of 1970s USDA Secretary Earl Butz. *The Grist*. February 8. Available online: http://grist.org/article/the-butz-stops-here/. Accessed: June 24, 2017.
- Purdue Center for Regional Development. 2006. Innovation in American Regions: Innovation Index. Available online: https://www.statsamerica.org/innovation/index.html. Accessed: July 30, 2017.
- Ratcliffe, Michael, Charlynn Burd, Kelly Holder, and Alison Fields. 2016. Defining Rural at the U.S. Census Bureau. *American Community Survey and Geography Brief.* ACSGEO-1. Washington, DC: US Census Bureau. Available online: https://www2.census.gov/geo/pdfs/reference/ua/Defining_Rural.pdf. Accessed: July 2, 2017.
- Reinhold, Rich. 2015. *Illinois Labor Market Review: Changes to Illinois Metropolitan Statistical Area Delineations Following the 2010 Census*. February. Springfield, IL: Illinois Department of Employment Security | Economic Information and Analysis Division. Available online: http://www.ides.illinois.gov/LMI/ILMR/Changes to MSA.pdf. Accessed: July 2, 2017.
- Runyon, Luke. 2017a. As Big, High-Tech Farms Take Hold, How Do Nearby Towns Stay Afloat? WIUM-NPR. Macomb, IL. Available online: http://tspr.org/post/big-high-tech-farms-take-hold-how-do-nearby-towns-stay-afloat. Accessed: July 30, 2017.
- Runyon, Luke. 2017b. Why is the opioid epidemic hitting rural America especially hard? Illinois Edition. WUIS-NPR. Springfield, IL. Available online: http://nprillinois.org/post/why-opioid-epidemic-hitting-rural-america-especially-hard#stream/0. Accessed: July 4, 2017.

- Rust, Max. 2016. Report: Illinois worst state for job recovery after Great Recession. *Chicago Sun-Times*. June 24. Available online: http://chicago.suntimes.com/news/report-illinois-worst-state-for-job-recovery-after-great-recession/. Accessed: July 4, 2017.
- Sanger-Katz, Margot. 2015. Income inequality: It's also bad for your health. *New York Times*. March 30. Available online: https://www.nytimes.com/2015/03/31/upshot/income-inequality-its-also-bad-for-your-health.html. Accessed: January 20, 2016.
- Schwarz, Nelson and Julie Creswell. 2015. A global chill in commodity demand hits America's Heartland. New York Times. October 23. Available online: https://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/25/business/energy-environment/americas-heartland-feels-a-chill-from-collapsing-commodity-prices.
 https://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/25/business/energy-environment/americas-heartland-feels-a-chill-from-collapsing-commodity-prices.
 https://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/25/business/energy-environment/americas-heartland-feels-a-chill-from-collapsing-commodity-prices.
 https://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/25/business/energy-environment/americas-heartland-feels-a-chill-from-collapsing-commodity-prices.
 https://www.nytimes.com/
 <a href="h
- Smith, Morgan. 2011. Schools are resigned to Robin Hood. *New York Times*. December 2. Available online: http://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/02/us/schools-are-resigned-to-robin-hood.html. Accessed: July 4, 2017.
- Stam, Jerome, Steven Koenig, Susan Bentley, and H. Fredrick Gale, Jr. 1991. Farm Financial Stress, Farm Exits, and Public Sector Assistance to the Farm Sector in the 1980s. Agricultural Economic Report Number 645. Washington, DC: USDA, Economic Research Service. Available online: https://naldc.nal.usda.gov/download/CAT91959390/PDF. Accessed: May 10, 2017.
- Talbot, Margaret. 2017. The addict next door. *The New Yorker*. June 5. Available online: http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2017/06/05/the-addicts-next-door. Accessed: June 30, 2017.
- Thompson, Paul. 2012. Re-Envisioning the agrarian ideal. *Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics*. 25 (4): 553–562. Available online: https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10806-011-9329-z. Accessed: June 24, 2017.
- US Census. 2010. 2006-2010 American Community Survey, Five Year Estimates, Table DP03. Available online: http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=bkmk. Accessed: July 29, 2016.
- US Census. 2016. Annual Estimates of the Resident Population: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2016. American Fact Finder. Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division. Available online: https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=PEP_2016
 PEPANNRES&prodType=table. Accessed: July 2, 2017.
- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). 2017. Food Access Food Atlas. Available online: https://www.ers.usda.gov/data/fooddesert. May 10, 2017.
- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). 2012. Historical Highlights: 2012 and Earlier Census Years. US Census of Agriculture State Data. Available online: https://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Full_Report/Census_by_State/Illinois/. Accessed: July 3, 2017.

- Ushomirsky, Natasha and David Williams. 2015. Funding Gaps 2015. Too many states still spend less on educating students who need the most. Washington, DC: The Education Trust. Available online: https://edtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/FundingGaps2015 The Education Trust 1.pdf. Accessed: June 28, 2017.
- Walzer, Norman and Christopher D. Merrett. 2014. University-community outreach: Case study of the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs. In *University Engagement and Environmental Sustainability*, edited by Patricia Inman and Diana L. Robinson, pp. 124-140. Manchester, UK: University of Manchester Press.
- Wood, Richard. 2008. *Survival of Rural America: Small Victories and Bitter Harvests*. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas.

APPENDIX A GOVERNOR'S EXECUTIVE ORDER 13 (1991)



EXECUTIVE ORDER

NUMBER 13 (1991)

AN EXECUTIVE ORDER CREATING AN ANNUAL REPORT ON THE STATE OF THE RURAL ILLINOIS ECONOMY

WHEREAS, the Institute for Rural Affairs at Western Illinois University is the State's academic clearinghouse for rural development data and initiatives; and

WHEREAS, the Governor's Rural Affairs Council and the Institute for Rural Affairs coordinate rural development initiatives through the Office of the Lieutenant Governor; and

WHEREAS, the Lieutenant Governor as the Chairman of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council is given the authority to organize government and private sector resources to secure assistance for and to enhance the quality of life in rural Illinois; and

WHEREAS, the Institute for Rural Affairs at Western Illinois University has developed a format for an Annual Report on the State of Rural Economy and has agreed to produce this report.

THEREFORE, I, Jim Edgar, hereby order the following:

- A. Executive Order Number 6 and 7 (1986) are hereby amended in accordance with the provisions of this Executive Order.
- B. There is created an Annual Report on the State of the Rural Illinois Economy.
- C. The Annual Report on the State of the Rural Illinois Economy shall replace the Rural Fair Share Initiative created by Executive Order Number 6 (1986).
- D. The Institute for Rural Affairs at Western Illinois University shall organize the Annual Report in cooperation with the Governor's Rural Affairs Council.
- E. The Annual Report on the State of the Rural Illinois Economy shall assess rural economic indicators and make recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly on rural infrastructure needs.
- F. The Governor's Rural Affairs Council and the Institute for Rural Affairs Western Illinois University shall issue the Annual Report on the State of the Rural Illinois Economy no later than August 1 of each year to the Governor and General Assembly.
- G. For the purposes of the Annual Report on the State of the Rural Economy the following United States Bureau of the Census definitions as detailed in *Rural Revitalization: The Comprehensive State Policy For The Future* shall apply:
 - a. Rural County No municipality over 50,000 population. Under this definition Illinois has 76 nonmetropolitan or rural counties.
 - Rural Area Under 2,500 population regardless of whether they are in a Metropolitan Statistical Area or not.

This Executive Order Number 13 (1991), shall become effective upon filing with the Secretary of State.

October 11, 1991 Jim Edgar Governor

APPENDIX B GOVERNOR'S EXECUTIVE ORDER 11-4 (2011)



EXECUTIVE ORDER 11-04

EXECUTIVE ORDER REGARDING THE GOVERNOR'S RURAL AFFAIRS COUNCIL

WHEREAS, the Governor's Rural Affairs Council was created pursuant to Executive Order Number 7 on October 15, 1986, to maintain the rural emphasis in Illinois government, strengthen the rural economy, increase the capacity and viability of local government and improve education and human service opportunities in Illinois; and

WHEREAS, these issues remain priorities of the State of Illinois in the 21st Century; and

WHEREAS, the needs of rural residents and communities vary greatly from one part of the State of Illinois to another part of the State; and

WHEREAS, the rural challenges and opportunities continue to evolve over time; and

WHEREAS, the Institute for Rural Affairs at Western Illinois University is the academic clearinghouse in the State of Illinois for rural development and initiatives; and

WHEREAS, policies and programs developed to meet the needs of rural Illinoisans are most effective when directed and coordinate by a leader at the highest level of state government; and

WHEREAS, the Governor's Rural Affairs Council and the Institute for Rural Affairs at Western Illinois University coordinate rural development initiatives through the Office of the Lieutenant Governor; and

WHEREAS, the Lieutenant Governor, as Chair of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council, has the authority to organize government and private sector resources to secure assistance and enhance the quality of life for rural Illinois; and

THEREFORE, I, Pat Quinn, Governor of Illinois, pursuant to the powers vested in me by Article V of the Constitution of Illinois, do hereby order as follows;

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council is to develop and implement strategies for improving delivery of State of Illinois services to rural Illinois and to expand opportunities and enhance the quality of life for rural residents. The Governor's Rural Affairs Council and the Institute for Rural Affairs at Western Illinois University shall continue to issue an Annual Report in accordance with Executive Order Number 13 of October 11, 1991.

II. MEMBERSHIP

- a. The Lieutenant Governor shall serve as Chair of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council.
- b. Members of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council shall include one representative from each of the following Illinois not-for-profit corporations: Illinois Agricultural Association and Rural Partners.
- c. Members of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council shall also include one representative from each of the following governmental agencies or institutions in the State of Illinois: Illinois Department on Aging, Illinois Department of Agriculture, Illinois Department of Commerce of Economic Opportunity, Illinois Department of Employment Security, Illinois Department of Human Service, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Illinois Department of Public Health, Illinois Department of Transportation, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, Illinois Community College Board, Illinois State Board of Education, University of Illinois-Cooperative Extension Service, Illinois Housing Development Authority, Southern Illinois University, Illinois for Rural Affairs at Western Illinois University, and Illinois Finance Authority.
- d. The Governor shall appoint up to six citizen members to serves on the Governor's Rural Affairs Council as required to increase the Governor's Rural Affairs Council as required to increase the Governor's Rural Affairs Council memberships to a total of no more than 25 members.

III. GOVERNANCE

- a. The Council shall meet as often as the Chair deems necessary.
- b. The governmental agencies or institutions in the State of Illinois with representatives eligible to serve on the Governor's Rural Affairs Council shall provide information upon request to the Chair of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council concerning agency programs, data, and activities that impact rural Illinois.
- c. The Chair of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council may appoint persons, including but not limited to, representatives from government, private industry, and not-for-profit organizations, to serve on committees of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council and to provide input to the Governor's Rural Affairs Council as a whole.

IV. TRANSPARENCY

In addition to whatever policies or procedures the Governor's Rural Affairs Council may adopt, all operations of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council will be subject to the provision of the Illinois Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 430/1 et seq.) and the Illinois

Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 12011 et seq.). This Section shall not be construed so as to preclude other statutes from applying to the Governor's Rural Affairs Council and its activities.

V. PRIOR EXECUTIVE ORDERS

Executive Order Number 6 of October 15, 1986, Executive Order Number 7 of October 15, 1986, Executive Order Number 13 of October 11, 1991, and Executive Order Number 1 of January 11, 2000, are each hereby amended in accordance with the provisions of this Executive Order Number 11-04.

VI. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Executive Order Number 11-04 shall become effective upon filing with the Secretary of State.

Pat Quinn Governor

Issued by the Governor: May 18, 2011

Filed with the Secretary of State: May 18, 2011